

**THE
INSTRUMENT FOR
UNDERSTANDING
QUR'AN**



Dr. Rafiq Ahmad

Instrument for Understanding Qur'an

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Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) says:

فِي رَأْسِ الْإِنْسَانِ عِزَّةٌ

كُلُّهُ

وَهِيَ كَلْبَةٌ

" Indeed there is a piece of flesh in the body (the heart) when that stays right, the whole body stays right, when that goes astray, the whole body goes astray! Listen with open ears, that is Qalb" (Bukhâri Sharief)

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Preface

All praises are for Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala Who created the heavens and earth and all that is between them and is holding the skies without any pillars. Who is Blessed , in Whose hands is Dominion, Who has Power over all things ,Who created Death and Life, Who is the Exalted in Might, Oft-Forgiving. He sent the last testament which is such that no falsehood can approach it from before or behind it: It is sent down by One Full of Wisdom, Worthy of all Praise. Praise be to Allah, Who hath sent to His Servant the Book, and hath allowed therein no Crookedness: Allah is the Protector of those who have faith: from the depths of darkness He will lead them forth into light. So, what is in the depths of darkness and what gets enlightenment? In this book a humble effort has been made to answer this question. It is the Qalb , the real instrument for understanding the Qura'n . I hope this booklet will prove quite useful to the seekers of the truth by the grace of Almighty Allah and I pray to Allah Ta'ala to accept this little work and make it a means of salvation for me in the hereafter.

Chapter 1 - Qalb

Allah Ta'ala created this huge and expanding universe with perfection and systematic organization and created in it all what is known to Him alone. He wanted His unimaginable Attributes to get revealed. The Most Merciful and Most Magnificent Himself says in a Hadith-Qudsi:

فأحببت مخفيته أن أكنز كنيت خلق فخالقت

"I was a hidden treasure, I liked to get known so I created the whole creation".

This knowledge of the Attributes of Allah Ta'ala is known as Ma'ârifat. The unimaginable vastness, height and the greatness of the Attributes of Allah Ta'ala are unlimited, whereas the whole universe is very much limited. There was a great discrepancy between the unlimited vastness, greatness and height of the Attributes of Allah Ta'ala and the limited capacity of this universe, but at the same time Allah Ta'ala wanted this immense hidden treasure of the unlimited Attributes to get revealed. If Allah Ta'ala would have revealed these Attributes directly, the universe would not have been able to tolerate the Tajaliyaat (manifestations) of these Attributes and the whole universe would have got burnt down to ashes.

Out of all the creations of Allah Ta'ala, He created man as His best creation Ashraf-ul-Makhluqât (noble creature). As Allah Ta'ala says:

تَقْوِيم

"We have indeed created man in the best of moulds." (95:4)

In man Allah Ta'ala has created human heart as the best and chief Organ and the Qur'ân labels it as Qalb. As Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) says:

كُلُّهُ فِي مَحَارِمُهُ ضَرِيحٌ فِي كُلِّهِ وَهِيَ كُلُّهُ

"Indeed there is a piece of flesh in the human body, if it stays alright, the whole body stays alright, if it goes astray, the whole body goes astray. Listen with open ears: that is Qalb". (Bukhâri Sharief)

What is Qalb

It is necessary to mention here that the word Qalb is not synonymous with the human heart which consists of muscular and connective tissues filled with some venous and arterial blood that we see in the left side of the chest, but as per the definition given in "Jalalain" (an authentic commentary of the Holy Qur'ân): Qalb is an instrument which has been given the capability of perceiving the divine Attributes.

النورانية اللطيفة نفس على يطلق الإنسانية اللطيفة وهو القلب
 بها الإنسان يكون وبها الصمدانية إلهية الأنوار مهبطة هي التي العالمة الربانية
 الروحاني تولدت هي الزواجر اجتناب الكتاب يستعد
 المظهر القهر سهام هدف لكونها الناطقة بالنفس الحكيم عنها يعبر
 المرضية منبع الصحو القبض البسط
 قيل في أنه قيل علم هي تلك ذهب الناس كثير الرديّة
 مشهور فيها الكلام الباطنية الحواس إثبات على بني بينهم مشترك أنه
 كان ينكرها سرية معنوية القلب بين وجدانه
 (المعاني) شهيد هو السمع القى قلبه

Allah Ta'ala says in the Qur'ân:

يَسْرَحُ يُهْدِيَهُ يُرِدْ

‘Those whom He willeth to guide - He openeth their breast to ‘Islam’.
 (6:125)

This opening up of the breast, which is the seat of the Qalb, has been linked with understanding of guidance from Allah Ta'ala .

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) says in a Hadith:

"My eyes sleep, my heart does not sleep". (Mishkat Sharief)

Rasulullah further says in a Hadith:

"Indeed, a Ghain (a sort of veil) is put on my heart and indeed I ask Istigfar (repentance) to Allah Ta'ala 100 times a day." (Muslim Sharief)

It is because of this Istigfar that these veils were getting lifted and the Qalb-i-Mubarak (blessed heart) of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) continued to receive higher and higher states of the Divine Knowledge.

Abu-AL-Hasan Bin Muhammad (RA) used to say:

أنا القلب القلب يقولون الناس الساعة قيام إلي ابن وقت
فلا القلب كيف القلب إلى يصف

“Since the creation of Adam (AS) upto the Day of Qiyamah (the Day of Judgement), people would continue to say Qalb, Qalb. I like to see a person who would tell me as to what Qalb is and what is it like, but I don't see anyone. People call a piece of flesh as Qalb but that is present in children as well as insane people, then what is Qalb? If I call intellect as Qalb but it is not Qalb and if I call Rooh (Spirit) as Qalb but that is also not Qalb and if I call its knowledge as Qalb but that is also not Qalb and all the constituents of Reality are related to Qalb but Qalb is something other than these.

Shah Wali-Ullah Muhaddith Delhvi (RA) says:

"Qalb is that thing by which man loves and hates."

This means according to Shah Sahib Qalb is the seat of love and hatred.

Hadhrat Haji Imdad-Ullah Muhajir Makki (RA), a great saint of recent past and Shaikh of great scholarship like Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi (RA), Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (RA), Maulana Qasim Nanotvi (RA) (The Founder of Darul Uloom Deoband), used to say that he has been bestowed upon by Allah Ta'ala some special blessings and these include knowledge about Qalb as well, that means Allah Ta'ala had given him such knowledge by which he could understand the Reality of Qalb and its attributes.

In other words we have different instruments for knowing different things, for example, we have thermometer to help us know the temperature of a human body, sphygmomanometer is there to tell us the blood pressure of a person. So what instrument Allah Ta'ala has created in this universe with which one can perceive Him, get His Ma'arifat and has the capability of receiving and perceiving the rays of the Attributes of Allah Ta'ala. You have got the answer that it is the Qalb. Since it is closely associated with the human heart so the two are usually thought to be synonymous and both words are usually used for describing the same thing, though there is a difference as already explained. It is in view of this greatness and extraordinary important function of the human heart that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) once caught the edge of the outer curtain of Khana-Ka'aba and said:

“O Khanah Ka'abah you are indeed great but the Qalb (Heart) of a Mumin (True believer) is greater than you" (Ibn Majah Sharief)

In this Hadith, Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is referring to the greatness of the human heart. This greatness of the human heart is only because of its most important function i.e., Ma'ârifat-i-Ilâhiyah. It is because of this function which makes it king of the rest of the organs (Ra'eesul Aadha).

Allah Ta'ala confirms this function of heart or Qalb by saying in the Qur'ân:

فَأِنَّهَا بِهِلْدَمَ مَعُونٍ بِهِلْعَ قُلُوبٍ لَهُمْ يَسِيرُوا

"Do they not travel through the land, so that their hearts (and minds) may thus learn wisdom and their ears may thus learn to hear. Truly it is not the eyes that are blind but the hearts which are in their breasts." (22:46)

This statement of the Qur'ân clearly reveals that it is only the heart that can perceive the Reality. These external eyes, which have a limited range of vision, cannot see the Reality. These can only see the coarse things and not the benign things. The range of the vision of heart i.e., inner vision, is infinite. The range of the vision of external eyes is no comparison to it.

Allah Ta'ala invited His beloved Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) to the highest point of humanity, the highest peak which was possible for a human being to reach but which was possible only for the greatest of the greats i.e., our beloved Prophet Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). This was the highest status which is commonly known as

Mairaj (Rasulullah's (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) midnight ascension). The capability given to the human heart (Qalb) was utilized to its maximum by the sacred Qalb-i-Mubarak of Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) for knowing the Ultimate Reality – the Almighty Allah Ta'ala. When Allah Ta'ala mentioned this highest achievement of man, He again used the word 'Heart'.

"The (Prophet's) heart in no way falsified that which he saw." (53:11)

This again indicates that the highest perception of the ultimate Reality i.e., Allah Ta'ala was achieved again by the same instrument i.e., Qalb. In the another Qur'anic verse, Allah Ta'ala says:

لَهُ شَهِيدٌ هُوَ

“ Verily in this is a message for any that has a heart and understanding or who gives ear and is a witness.” (50:37)

Here Allah Ta'ala clearly declares that to understand the message of the Qur'an and to get benefit from this immense treasure, one needs to have a Qalb. Here one may say that everybody has a heart, then why does not every body understand the Qur'an? The answer is that one needs a pure and live heart (i.e., Qalb) which can utilise its special capability of perceiving the Attributes of Allah Ta'ala and can unfold the curtain which

otherwise obscures the view from the real meaning of the Qur'anic message. Allah Ta'ala says in the Qur'an:

يَصَدَّعْدُوْا ضَيْقًا يَجْعَلُ يُّضِلُّهُ يُّرِدُّ يَجْعَلُ
يَشْرَحُ يَهْدِيَهُ يُّرِدُّ يَجْعَلُ
يُؤْمِنُوْنَ الَّذِيْنَ

“ Those who Allah Ta'ala willeth to guide, He openeth their breast to Islam. Those whom He willeth to leave straying- He maketh their breast close and constricted As if they had to climb up to the skies, thus Doth Allah Ta'ala lay abomination on those who refuse to believe” (6:125)

In this verse Allah Ta'ala has linked His bestowing of guidance to somebody with opening of his breast for Islam. Since breast is the seat of Qalb, so its opening is the opening of Qalb for Islam. This process has been described as the enlightening of the heart with the Eternal Light. As Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) while explaining the above mentioned Qur'anic verse says:

“Ibn-Masood (RA) narrated that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) recited (the above mentioned verse) “ those whom Allah Ta'ala willeth to guide, He openeth their breast to Islam" then Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said when the light (External) enters the breast it opens. He was asked, is there any sign by which this (Eternal Light) can be appreciated? he said,“ yes forsaking the world of deception and inclination towards the eternal world (Hereafter) and preparation for death.” (Mishkat)

In this Hadith, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), has clearly pointed out that enlightening of the heart with the Eternal Light means the opening of the heart. From the Aayat quoted above and the Hadith the inference can easily be derived that it is the enlightened heart (Qalb) that gets the guidance of Allah Ta'ala and can, therefore, perceive the Truth and the ultimate Reality. Now the question arises if the heart is not enlightened by this Eternal Light, then what?

Zulmat and Nur (Darkness and Light)

The opposite of the Light is Darkness. The Qur'ân has mentioned these as Nur and Zulmat respectively.

The heart which is not illuminated by the Eternal Light is said to be in darkness or blind as Allah Ta'ala says in the Qur'ânic verse, already quoted, that their (external) eyes are not blind but their hearts are blind. This darkness of heart (Qalb) is called Zulmat whereas the Eternal Light which enlightens the heart is called Nur. Allah Ta'ala reveals this in the Qur'ân:

يُخْرِجُوهُمْ أَوْ لِيَأْتُوهُمْ وَالَّذِينَ فِيهَا هُمْ يُخْرِجُهُمُ الَّذِينَ

“ Allah Ta'ala is the protector of those who have faith: From the depths of darkness He leads them forth into light.” (2:257)

Now if we recapitulate the Qur'anic revelations and the saying of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) already quoted in the previous lines, we can easily come to the conclusion that the function of the Qalb is to perceive the Divine Attributes, appreciate the Ultimate Reality and to understand the message of the Qur'an. If the Qalb is plunged into darkness, then obviously it is deprived of these functions and will be as good as dead. So, when a person has his Qalb in the depths of darkness, he cannot know the Truth, cannot understand the significance of the eternal life, cannot achieve Ma'arifat of Allah Ta'ala and cannot even smell the fragrance of the meaning of the Qur'an, not to speak of tasting and assimilating it. This person is like a frog in a well that is totally unaware of the vastness of this universe, as this frog thinks that the well in which it lives is the only world.

In medical terms, we are aware of two states of mind, conscious and subconscious states. Normally, in the majority of people the major portion of mind remains in subconscious state and only a little portion attains conscious state or else one can say that the major portion of mind remains in darkness and only a little portion gets enlightened. It is the conscious portion of mind that is utilised by man, therefore, the major portion of his mind remains un-utilised.

If one talks of neuro-anatomy and physiology of human brain, the modern medical science has yet succeeded in knowing the anatomy and physiology of only few centres of brain, a tip of an iceberg. The mystery of tremendous ocean of the brain potential remains unexplored to the scientists of Medicine even today.

The same does not hold true about the great muslim research scholars. As Allah Ta'ala took them from the depths of darkness forth into the light which enlightened their subconscious state, converting that into conscious state. With this enlightenment their ratio of conscious state and subconscious state got reversed, their conscious state of mind became so powerful that it gave them immense vision which could penetrate all the curtains that otherwise lie between the Reality and the Mind and between, the Qalb and the external eyes.

Chapter 2 - Latent Qualities of a Man

Allah Ta'ala says

شَهِدْنَا أَنفُسِهِمْ وَأَشْهَدَهُمْ لِيَتَّخِذَ بَيْنَهُمْ ظُهُورَهُمْ
غَافِلِينَ هَذَا الْقِيَامَةَ يَوْمَ

"When thy Lord drew forth from the children of Adam from their loins-
their descendants and made them testify concerning themselves
(Saying)" Am I not your lord (Who cherishes and sustains you) ? They said:
Yea! We do testify (this) lest Ye should say on the Day of Judgment of this
we were never mindful." (7:172)

This verse provides an ample evidence of the fact that Allah Ta'ala has
inculcated in the genes of a man the capacity necessary to recognize the
Oneness of Allah Ta'ala, His supreme authority and the only Sustainer and
Cherisher of the World. It is only after this highest spiritual capability
given to Adam and his sons that Allah Ta'ala asked them to testify this.

There have been great men in the Islamic history like Zunun-Misri (RA)
etc. who vividly recollected this day of covenant as if it had happened just
that day itself. Zunun-Misri (RA), when asked if he remembered the
covenant used to say:

"The scene of that Covenant is still in front of my eyes, the sound of those
words is still ringing in my ears as if it has happened today itself."

Since man, with all his excellences, is forgetful as well, so Allah Ta'ala sent His Messengers (AS) to this world to remind the mankind of this covenant which is already in its genes. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said in a hadith:

"every child is born on the nature of Islam. His parents make him Jew, Christian or worshiper of fire". (Bukhâri & Muslim Sharief)

The latent qualities of man in the light and darkness

Allah Ta'ala says in the Qur'ân:

مُبِينٍ قُلُوبُهُمْ لِقَاسٍ يَاجْوِزَيْلَ رَبِّهِ فَهُوَ

“Is one whose heart Allah Ta'ala has opened to Islam, so that he received light from Allah Ta'ala. (No better than one hard hearted)? Woe to those whose hearts are hardened against the remembrance, of Allah Ta'ala! They are manifestly wandering (in error)". (39:22)

It is patently clear that knowledge of these things has been given to man and that he has been selected for the expression of all the Attributes of Allah Ta'ala and thus we have also come to know that man was busy in Mushahidah Haq in Aalam-i-Arwah and that he has recognised and testified that Allah Ta'ala is his Sustainer, his Cherisher and One and the Only one Lord worth worshipping. When man is born and comes to this

universe, these all qualities remain latent or concealed in him. In the verses of the Qur'ân quoted above, (Is one whose heart Allah Ta'ala has opened to Islam, so that he has received light from Allah Ta'ala? Allah Ta'ala again refers to these qualities of heart (Qalb). Those who receive the Divine Light, their latent qualities of Qalb get awakened and enlightened and thus become manifested. Their Qalb starts functioning in the presence of this Divine Light and becomes Muslim i.e., they understand the Qur'ân and recognise their Creator, Sustainer and Cherisher, Allah Ta'ala the Almighty and the Exalted.

Those who do not receive this Divine Light, their latent qualities of Qalb do not get manifested, they remain in darkness and in the process their Qalb fails to function and hence neither understand the Qur'ân nor recognise their Creator, Sustainer, Cherisher, Allah Ta'ala the Almighty and the Exalted. Allah Ta'ala calls these hearts as hardened. They remain in darkness and fail to expand their spiritual understanding and to receive Allah Ta'ala's Light. They travel in opposite direction. Just as there is spiritual progress for those who seek Allah Ta'ala, on the other hand there is more and more spiritual retrogression for those who close their hearts to Allah Ta'ala. Their hearts get hardened, and they allow less and less Allah Ta'ala's Grace to penetrate within. But it is obvious that they flounder on the way and cannot walk with the firm steps of those whose hearts abound in faith.

It is, therefore, well said: Hardened hearts are the most hated things near Allah Ta'ala. Allah Ta'ala taught us this Dua in the Qur'ân:

وَهَبْهُدَيْنَا

الْوَهَّابُ

“O Lord! they say, let not our hearts deviate. Now after Thou has guided us, But grant us mercy from Thee. For Thou art the grantor of bounties without measure." (3:8)

Qalb-i-Saleem (Safe heart):

Allah Ta'ala further says in the Qur'ân:

سَلِيم

“But only he (will prosper) that brings to Allah Ta'ala a sound heart”.
(26:89)

For real prosperity you need a properly functioning heart that is liked by Allah Ta'ala. Saleem is a word derived from Salaamat. It is a broad term but we can translate it as 'safe', also. Qalb is necessary for the real prosperity and safe Qalb is liked by Allah Ta'ala.

The safe Qalb means that all the qualities (latent or manifest) that have been given to it, are not wasted. The immense potential, which Allah Ta'ala has bestowed to the human Qalb is intact and well used and not disused.

It was already mentioned that man has been selected for expression of all the Attributes of Allah Ta'ala. Man's Qalb is framed to accommodate the faculties of quite different and opposing nature, as man is a mixture of

opposites. If each faculty of Qalb remains in its right proportion and limits and each does its job in a just manner, it can be called as Saleem (safe). What is safe, is sound and healthy as well. If it is not safe, it is not sound and healthy i.e., it is diseased. When it is diseased, it stops doing its function. It is the king of all parts of the body and when the king becomes defunct one can imagine the fate of the nation (the man).

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) says:

فِي

كُلُّهُ

وَهِيَ كُلُّهُ

“ Indeed there is a piece of flesh in the body (the heart) when that stays right, the whole body stays right, when that goes astray, the whole body goes astray! Listen with open ears, that is Qalb” (Bukhâri Sharief)

When the king is in right condition and functions properly, the subjects will be in right condition and they will also function properly and vice versa.

The most blessed Qalb which got the highest expansion and elevation

In the human history the most blessed Qalb which Allah Ta’ala selected for the highest purification, expansion and elevation was that of Muhammad-Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).

Allah Ta'ala says in the Qur'ân:

“Have We not expanded thee thy breast?”. (94:1)

The breast is symbolically the seat of knowledge and the highest feelings of love and affection. It is the treasure house in which are stored the jewels of that quality of human character, which is divine. The Holy Prophet's (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) human nature had been purified, expanded and elevated, so that he became the mercy for all the creation.

The Qalb of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) which is the most blessed got the highest Divine Light and he utilised the capabilities of Qalb to its maximum. All the latent faculties of Qalb got the highest illumination by the Divine Light and thus Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) attained the highest spiritual understanding and nearness to the ultimate Reality.

The Qur'ân is the Attribute of Allah Ta'ala and that the Attributes of Allah Ta'ala are immense and ultimate. Nothing in this universe had the capability of receiving this Divine Revelation. The Qalbs of all the men except that of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) could not attain this spiritual height which was necessary for being capable of receiving this divine revelation i.e., the Qur'ân. The Qalb of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) being the most blessed had this capability. It is said that if Allah

Ta'ala would have sent this revelation directly to this universe, it would have got burnt down to ashes.

Allah Ta'ala had decided to express His divine revelation, He created this capability in the most blessed Qalb of Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).

Allah Ta'ala refers to this the most blessed Qalb of Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) as follows:

(الْمُنذِرِينَ) (الْأَوْمِينَ) بِهِ (الْعَالَمِينَ) لَنْزِيلٍ وَإِنَّهُ

"Verily this is a revelation from the Lord of the worlds. With it came down the truthful spirit To thy heart that thou mayest admonish." (26:192-194)

Qalb signifies not only the seat of affection, but also seat of memory and understanding. The process of inspiration is indicated by the impression of the divine message on the inspired one's heart, memory and understanding from which it was promulgated in human speech to the world.

It is said that Jalaal of the Divine Revelation was tolerated and absorbed by the Qalb of Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) which alone is the most blessed and when it was expressed through the blessed tongue of Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) it is was Jamaal only, which the rest of the humanity and this universe could tolerate.

Chapter 3 - The Seal of Prophethood

The humanity reached its peak in the most distinguished self of Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). The Divine Light and knowledge was attained to its maximum possible limit by him. In other words, the quintessence of all the creation was achieved. Every Messenger of Allah Ta'ala was predominantly the seat of expression of one of the Attributes of Allah Ta'ala, but the greatest and the last Messenger of Allah Ta'ala, Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was the seat of the expression of all the Attributes of Allah Ta'ala . This way he completed the chain of Messengers and put a seal on the Prophethood. He utilised the faculties of Qalb to the utmost and got the Divine Light of the highest degree. He received the Divine revelation – the Qur'ân, therefore, no room was left for any other person to go higher than this and no deficiency was left in the level of knowledge that could be achieved by any human being.

Allah Ta'ala certifies this seal of prophethood by Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) in the Qur'ân as:

النَّبِيِّنَ

عَلِيمًا

“Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but (he is) the Messenger of Allah Ta'ala and the seal of prophets and Allah Ta'ala has full knowledge of all things”. (33:40)

Five capacities of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)

The five capacities in which Allah Ta'ala has sent Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) are mentioned in the Qur'an as follows:

(مُنِيرًا بِإِذْنِهِ وَدَاعِيًا (وَنَذِيرًا شَاهِدًا أَيُّهَا يَا

"O, Prophet, Truly we have sent thee as a witness, a bearer of Glad Tidings and a Warner. And as one who invites to Allah Ta'ala's (grace) by His leave and as a lamp spreading light." (33:45-46)

1. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) as a witness:

Allah Ta'ala says that He has sent Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) as a witness to all men about the spiritual truths which had been obscured by ignorance, superstition and by dust of sectarian controversy.

2. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) as a bearer of glad tidings of Mercy of Allah Ta'ala:

He comes as a bearer of the glad tidings of Mercy of Allah Ta'ala . No matter how far men have transgressed, they have hope if they believe, repent, and live a good life.

3. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) as a warner:

He also comes as a warner to those who are heedless. This worldly life will not last long. There is a future life that is all important.

4. Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) as one who invites:

He comes as one who has a right to invite all men to repentance and the forgiveness of sins, but he does this, not of his own authority, but by the permission and authority given to him by Allah Ta'ala . This is said lest people may deify prophet as they did with other prophets.

5. Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) a Lamp spreading light:

Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) comes as a light or lamp (Siraj) to illuminate the whole world.

We have seen that the spiritual truths get obscured by ignorance and superstition etc. These jewels of spiritual truths and faculties of understanding thus remain in darkness and hidden. Allah Ta'ala due to immense mercy on mankind, sent Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) as a lamp spreading light (Siraj) so that the spiritual faculties of man get enlightened to enable him to understand the Divine Revelation, the Qur'an and get the knowledge of the ultimate Reality.

It is, therefore, important that if one wants to come out of this spiritual darkness and to understand the Divine Revelation – the Qur'an, one has to

get the light from this lamp spreading light, i.e., Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). Without the aid of this light one cannot understand the 'Reality' and can never come out of the spiritual darkness.

مُبِينٌ

"There hath come to you from Allah Ta'ala a (new) light and perspicuous book". (5:15)

Authentic commentators of the Qur'ân are of the opinion that the 'Nur' (light) mentioned in this verse, means Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). Allah Ta'ala has sent him as a lamp which spreads light as already quoted from the Qur'ân in the preceding verse. So we have got two lights, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is the one light and al-Qur'ân is the other light as it has also been mentioned as Nur.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) says:

"First thing that Allah Ta'ala created was my Nur (light)". (Musanaf Abdul Razak)

You can well imagine the significance of this 'Nur' (light) of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).

Anyone who wants to have knowledge of the Ultimate Reality – Almighty Allah Ta’ala and the Divine Light of the Qur’ân, needs the light of Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).

رَحِيمٌ وَيَغْفِرُ يُدْنِيكُمْ

“Say (O! Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) ‘If you do love Allah Ta’ala, follow me: Allah Ta’ala will love you and forgive your sins: For Allah Ta’ala is Oft-Forgiving Most Merciful” . (3:31)

If you want favour and bounties of Allah Ta’ala, if you want His pleasure and if you want His immense mercy, then you have no other way but to follow the light of Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).

Allah Ta’ala wants man to follow this light of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), He says:

كَثِيرًا وَالْيَوْمَ يَرْجُو

"You have indeed in the Messenger of Allah Ta’ala (Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), an excellent exemplar for him who hopes in Allah Ta’ala and the Final Day, and who remembers Allah Ta’ala much” . (33:21)

So it becomes quite obvious that there is only one door that leads to the Reality – ‘Allah Ta’ala’ i.e., the door of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). There is only one way of coming out of the spiritual darkness, that is by following the light of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) says:

الدَّيْلَمِيُّ السَّيِّبَانِيُّ يَحْيَى عِيَّاشُ إِسْمَاعِيلُ
 يَقُولُ وَسَلَّمَ عَلَيْهِ صَلَّى- يَقُولُ
 اهْتَدَى أَصَابَهُ عَلَيْهِمْ خَلَقَهُ
 حَدِيثٌ هَذَا عَيْسَى .

Abdullah Ibn Umar (RA) narrated that he heard Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) as saying “Indeed Allah Ta’ala created His creations in darkness then bestowed upon them His light” so whosoever got his share from the light he found the right path and whosoever did not get his share from this light” he went astray” (Tirmidhi, Ahmad)

Qalb – The seat of faculty of understanding and knowledge

Allah Ta’ala says in the Qur’ân:

وَلَهُمْ يُبْصِرُونَ أَعْيُنٌ وَلَهُمْ بِهِمْ يَفْقَهُونَ لَهُمْ كَثِيرًا لِّجَهَنَّمَ
 هُمْ هُمْ بِهِمْ مَعُونَ

“ Many are the jinns and men we have made for Hell. They have hearts where-with they understand not, eyes wherewith they see not and ears wherewith they hear not. They are like cattle -nay more misguided: for they are heedless (of warning)”. (7:179)

Here Allah Ta’ala once again clearly reveals that the seat of faculty of understanding is Qalb and those who do not make use of this faculty, they are as good as cattle.

Rabeea Al-Jurashi (RA) quotes Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) as saying:

“An angel came to him and said, "Let your eyes sleep, let your ears hear but your Qalb (heart) remain awakned”. (Mishkaat Sharief)

This is a vast subject, I would like to conclude it in the light of the Qur’ânic revelations and Ahâdith which I have quoted, the following conclusions become quite crystal clear to us:

1. Qalb is the seat of faculty of understanding and divine knowledge.
2. Qalb is the instrument which has been specially devised for receiving and appreciating the eternal light.

3. For proper understanding of the Qur'ân, a pure, live and properly functioning Qalb is needed.
4. The spiritual jewels have been kept hidden in darkness in the Qalb.
5. Blind Qalb can neither attain any spiritual height nor know the Reality.
6. To bring Qalb out of darkness so that it can utilise its higher faculties, a light is needed.
7. The light can be had from one and the only lamp and that is Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) .
8. In other words we can say understanding of the Qur'ân is the function of Qalb which is illuminated and the enlightened by the light of the lamp of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) , which makes it capable of receiving eternal light necessary for unraveling the spiritual truths.

What destroys the highest inherent capabilities of Qalb

: وَسَلَّمَ عَلَيْهِ صَلَّى - هُرَيْرَةَ
 قَلْبُهُ قَلْبِهِ
 (كِتَابِهِ
 يَكْسِبُونَ قُلُوبَهُمْ

Abu Hurairah (RA) narrates that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has said: "Indeed when a man commits sin, there occurs a black stain on his heart. Then if he repents and asks forgiveness (from Allah Ta'ala) his heart gets cleaned and if he commits more sins, that black stain increases in size till it covers the whole heart. It is that cover of impure (sins), which has been called Ra'an (rust), which Allah Ta'ala mentions in the verse No. (83:14)" (Ibn Majah)

يَكْسِبُونَ قُلُوبِهِمْ

"By no means! But on their hearts is the stain of the (ill) which they do".
(83:14)

The heart of man, as created by Allah Ta'ala is pure and unsullied. When a man does an evil deed, it makes a stain on his heart. But on repentance or forgiveness, this stain gets washed off. If such a person doesn't repent or is not forgiven, this stain deepens as well as spreads more and more, until his heart is sealed and eventually he dies a spiritual death. These are such stains which prevent the heart from perceiving truths which are otherwise obvious to enlightened hearts.

Allah Ta'ala says

عَظِيمٌ وَلَهُمْ صَادِرُهُمْ سَمِعَ عِهِمْ قُلُوبِهِمْ

“Allah hath set a seal on their hearts and on their hearing and on their eyes is a veil, Great is the chastisement They (incur). (2: 7)

Pure heart is like a mirror. If it is free from these evil stains, it has the ability to receive and reflect the Divine Light which penetrates the veils lying between the Reality and the eyes. But if this mirror of Qalb (Divine) is stained with evil deeds, it gets sullied and hence unable to receive this light. It loses its function and becomes as good as dead. This dead state of Qalb is here referred to in Aayat (2:7) as a seal, as if their hearts have been sealed.

The biggest and the darkest stain on Qalb is caused by Kufr (not believing in Allah Ta'ala and His Messenger – Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam))

This evil almost completely darkens the Qalb and one can say it gets completely sealed or shut off from the Reality.

In case of believers the ratio of the stain on Qalb and the evil deeds is directly proportional. More the evil deeds, more the stains and vice versa. If a believers do not desist from these kind of deeds and remains adamant on the evil deeds of major significance, there is every apprehension that his heart may also get sealed which he may not be even knowing.

May Allah Ta'ala protect our hearts from this disease- Aamin.

Allah Ta'ala says in the Qur'ân:

بَكَّرَهُمْ عَلَيْهَا وَقَوْلِهِمْ بَغْيًا لِأَنْبِيَاءٍ وَقَتْلِهِمْ بآيَاتِهِمْ كَفَرَهُمْ مِيثَاقَهُمْ تَقَضَّيَهُمْ قَلِيلًا يُؤْمِنُونَ

“(They have incurred divine displeasure): In that they broke their covenant. That they rejected the signs of Allah Ta’ala; that they slew the Messenger in defiance of right; that they said, “ Our hearts are the wrappings” Nay, Allah Ta’ala hath set the seal on their hearts for their blasphemy, And little is it they believe”.(4:155)

أَقْفَالَهَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ

"Do they not then Earnestly seek to understand The Qur'ân, or is that there are Locks upon their Hearts." (47:24)

Because of these serious evils, Allah Ta’ala sets the seal on their hearts so that they no more deserve the Divine Light and divine pleasure. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) , says that: "The hardened heart (the heart which is stained and darkened) is disliked by Allah Ta’ala the most.”.

Chapter 4 - Locks Upon the Qalb

Allah Ta'ala says in the Qur'an:

أَفَقَالِهَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ

“ Do they not then earnestly seek to understand the Qur'an, or is that there are locks upon their hearts ?” (47:24)

Allah Ta'ala has sent an immense treasure to man in the form of the Qur'an. Allah Ta'ala wants man to earnestly seek to understand this Divine revelation and to do justice to his own capabilities which Allah Ta'ala has bestowed upon him. It is in this context that Allah Ta'ala pities those who do not seek to understand the Qur'an. The failure to understand the Qur'an has been attributed to the locks upon their hearts in this verse of the Qur'an.

It is the duty of everybody to know the essence and reality of these locks? And secondly to try his level best to scrutinize the condition of his Qalb and see if it is not locked.

Qalb is capable of seeking the secrets of heavens

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: " If the Satan would not have been roaming around the hearts of men, they would have been able to see the angels (and the secrets) of heavens." (Baihaqi Sharief)

It is this haziness caused by the Satan on the plain mirror of the Qalb that obscures it from viewing the Realities. Otherwise this mirror of Qalb, if kept clean or got cleaned, has the capability to view those things which remain hidden. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) further says: "When a person is born, an angel and a Satan are posted on his Qalb, the angel invites him towards righteousness while Satan towards evil deeds." (Tirmidhi Sharief)

If a person follows the directions of the angel, his Satan becomes weak. On the other hand if a person follows the direction of the Satan, it becomes very strong and causes thick clouds on his Qalb. By following the Satan one commits sins. We have already quoted a hadith in which Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) says that sins cause dark stains on heart. Correlating the two we can infer that these are the sins which cause darkness or haziness on the Qalb. This darkness blocks the receptors of the Qalb which were to perceive the Reality. When these receptors fail to do so i.e., to perceive the Reality, we can say that these receptors of Qalb have got locked.

After knowing a little bit about these locks, now we can understand the meaning and significance of this DUA (prayer) in which Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

بذكرك قلوبنا افتح اللهم

“O Allah Ta’ala! open the locks of our hearts by (the grace of) your remembrance”.

Allah Ta’ala is Nur (Divine Light), His Attributes posses Nur and His name is full of Nur. When a Mumin (True Believer) remembers Him by His name, its Nur enters his Qalb and illuminates and enlightens it. The receptors of Qalb which had been in darkness of sins and in the grip of Satan receive the Divine Light which overcomes this darkness and also forces the Satan to vacate from this enlightened Qalb. The receptors of this Qalb start functioning and thereby it gets revived. Now we can understand this Qur’ânic verse well:

الَّذِينَ قُلُوبُهُمْ

"Those who believe and whose hearts find satisfaction in the remembrance of Allah Ta’ala for without doubt in the remembrance of Allah Ta’ala do the hearts find the satisfaction." (13:28)

How to get real peace of mind

These days almost the entire mankind is desperately in search of satisfaction and mental peace, which it is not getting from anywhere. Modern man tried his best to achieve this satisfaction from all corners but has failed miserably. He thought that he would get mental satisfaction and peace of mind if he has various luxuries available. He invented many things to make his life comfortable and easy, but these luxuries and

modern comforts could not get him peace of mind. Man has always been of the opinion that more and more wealth will make him satisfied and happy but needless to say that it has been proved time and again beyond doubt, that more wealth begets more worries.

Some people drink, dine and dance to satisfaction but they only ruin their lives and achieve nothing. Many people, out of frustration have fallen easy prey to drug addiction. They think that this is the only way of getting away from the worries of the life. Everybody knows the disastrous effects of drug addiction.

Some people think that renunciation, leading a secluded life in the far-off woods or mountain tops, running away from the active social life and shunning away all the social responsibilities is the only way to be happy. They think this world is full of troubles and worries, so it is better to run away and meditate in the seclusion. This method is inhuman and against the very purpose of mankind. Man is a social animal. He has to lead the world. The whole world has been created for him and he (the man) is the heart of this universe. If he runs away from this world then what is he for, and what is this world for ?

The reason for failure of achieving real happiness

Firstly, one must know what is the seat of happiness? Secondly, how it can be achieved. Without knowing these things, man has from times immemorial wandered in search of peace of mind. As already stated, man has tried many things in this connection but all in vain. The reason is simple i.e., only the manufacturer, the inventor or the creator of a

particular thing knows the best way of keeping that thing in perfectly correct state. Any other method, other than that advised by the manufacturer or inventor of that thing will cause more harm than good to that particular thing. For instance, If your watch goes out of order and you will try yourself to set it right, there is every possibility that you will cause more damage to that watch. Even if you take this watch to a highly trained and qualified medical doctor, he will not be able to set it right. It is only by that method, which has been advised by the manufacturer, that this watch can be set right, so it is mandatory to take this watch to either the manufacturer or one who has been trained by him.

In the same way, you must understand that the seat of the human happiness is the heart or Qalb. If you want to keep it happy you will have to ask its Creator the way to keep this happy. If you don't do that you will never succeed in achieving the real happiness or the peace of mind.

As Allah Ta'ala is the Creator of the Qalb, so only He knows how to keep it happy and in a healthy state. As He is the Most Gracious and Most Merciful. He has been kind enough to inform the mankind through the Holy Qur'an and His Messenger Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) the secret of achieving the happiness, as already quoted from the Qur'an. Allah Ta'ala says:

الَّذِينَ هُمْ

“Those who believe and whose hearts find satisfaction in the remembrance of Allah Ta'ala; for without doubt in remembrance of Allah Ta'ala do hearts find satisfaction.”. (13:28)

The first and the foremost pre-requisite for happiness is Imân

Firm faith in Allah Ta'ala, His book – the holy Qur'ân, His Messenger – Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is the first and the foremost pre-requisite as is evident in above quoted Qur'ânic verse. In this verse, Allah Ta'ala first mentions Imân – the belief in Allah Ta'ala. If you will try to collect the statistical data of the whole world showing the number of conversions of the people from Islam to other religions and vice versa, you will definitely see that a very high figure of conversions take place in the world from one religion to another religion but the number of Muslims getting converted to other religions will be the least, almost negligible despite the fact that missionaries are working in the world, spending billions of dollars to force the Muslims to change their religion. This becomes even more important because of the fact that the condition of Muslims and the Muslim countries in the last few centuries has not been good and pleasing. Despite the apparent bad conditions of Muslims and the Muslim countries, the number of Muslims has always been constantly on the ascending curve of the graph. These days particularly when the western civilization is offering man the most unimaginable luxuries, it is imperative for every body to think what is there in Islam that is forcing these people of sophisticated western society, who have all the luxuries of life available, to accept Islam, which apparently these days is in pitiable condition.

Let me quote an example. A boy was born to a Christian family in England whose father was a priest in a church. He wanted his son to become a scholar and preacher of the Christianity. For this purpose he sent his son to Christian missionary to receive education . The boy says that when he started reading the books written on Christianity, he was surprised to note

that almost all the Christian authors devote major portions of their books to denounce Islam. Most of the books are full of venom against Islam. Other religions are mentioned briefly. It is only Islam which they try to prove wrong using all the weapons in their armoury. After reading this he got interested to know Islam as to what sort of dangerous religion it really is that every Christian writer seems to be afraid of. The writing of these Christian authors became the basis for his desire to know Islam. He became eager to know about Islam and started studying Islamic literature. Since he had no prejudice, he found the truth which he accepted without any hesitation and embraced Islam. This is one aspect but what I want to convey is something more than this, what is the reason for real happiness and satisfaction which a true Muslim gets, is unimaginable to others.

It is because of this satisfaction for the human hearts, which Islam is carrying in its natural and uncorrupted form, that the Islam is thriving against all the odds. Islam is based on human nature. Allah Ta'ala says that He has created man as per His nature and Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) says that every child is born on the nature of Islam, it is his parents who make him Jew, Christian or Zoroastrians (Worshiper of fire).

A great Sufi Saint Hadhrat Baba Faridu-Din Ganj Shakar (RA) said that he asked four questions to six hundred great men (Awliya-Ullah), all of them replied the same answers to these questions. One of the four questions was, "What is Aql (Wisdom)? The answer they gave was 'Aql is that which recognises its Aqa (Creator)'. It is so simple to understand that if the Aql fails to do its basic duty, that is to recognise its Creator – Allah Ta'ala the Almighty, it does not deserve to be called Aql (Wisdom). A person failing to understand this cannot be regarded as wise.

A child feels at rest and safe when he is in his mother's lap. A person feels safe and gets mental peace when he is at home in the company of his parents and others to whom he is quite familiar. A person feels uneasy in the company of strangers and in strange surroundings. He always has a desire to go home in his subconscious mind. He always feels that he is missing something and that he has to reach somewhere. He may apparently be busy in various jobs but in his subconscious mind he always has that feeling of being a stranger and lacking something.

Similarly, man is a stranger in this world and this world is not his permanent home. The Rooh (Soul) of the man was created thousands of years before coming to this world. It was busy in Mushahida Haq enjoying the nearness of Allah Ta'ala. Allah Ta'ala says in the holy Qur'an that this Rooh (soul) of man is from His 'Amr. Rooh (Soul) has been familiar with Allah Ta'ala for thousands of years, in other words, was at home before coming to this world. Now one can understand as to why a man is a stranger in this world. The desire of going to his original home in that most pleasant company of Allah Ta'ala always remains in his mind. Some people are conscious of it and in most of the people this desire remains in subconscious state, so they do not feel it. They refute this claim and deny such things simply because they are not able to read their subconscious state. Nevertheless this desire is in everybody's mind whether it is in their conscious or subconscious minds. This is the basic reason of unrest, unhappiness, uneasiness or dissatisfaction.

Now one can understand the meaning of the Qur'anic verse quoted earlier very well, in which Allah Ta'ala says, " For without doubt in the remembrance of Allah Ta'ala do hearts find satisfaction." When a person having a firm faith in his Creator – Allah Ta'ala – The Most Exalted, remembers Him by heart, his Rooh (soul) recalls the olden days of Aalami-

Arwâh. It starts getting solace and feels a homely atmosphere. Its unrest and uneasiness starts diminishing and its feeling of being stranger starts fading. Dark clouds of Firaq (feeling of separation from Allah Ta'ala start thinning out. The dispersion of the Divine Light (Nur) starts watering the dry, barren land of heart causing its revivification (Ihya). This functionally dead heart now starts getting new life. It gets connection with its real source of energy. It becomes like a small container of water which has been connected to an ocean by means of an underground conduit, always getting inexhaustible fresh water supply.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) says in a Hadith that:

"A heart is alive when it is in remembrance of Allah Ta'ala and is as good as dead when it is not in remembrance of Allah Ta'ala." (Bukhâri Sharief)

If one gives a lot of gold, silver or diamonds to a hungry person, these are irrelevant to his stomach, intestines and satiety centre. Only a little food can satisfy him. In the same way one may give anything to his heart, it will not get satisfied unless it gets its real food and it finds itself in its favourite atmosphere.

Chapter 5 - Causes of Revivification (Ihya) and Enlightenment of Qalb

1. Firm faith in Allah Ta'ala.
2. Avoidance of pollution of Qalb by the filth of sins.
3. Remembrance of Allah Ta'ala.
4. Recitation of the Quran with Aadâb (etiquettes and pre-requisites).
5. Remembrance of Death and sense of accountability on the day of Judgement.
6. Following of the Sunnah (Tradition) of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) strictly.
7. To have the noble company and the guidance of Ahle-Dil (whose hearts are receiving-stations of the Divine Light).

1. Firm faith in Allah Ta'ala

This has already been described to some extent. This is the first and the foremost prerequisite for revivification and satisfaction of heart. The darkest and biggest stain which ruins the capability of pure and live heart is Kufr (not believing in Allah Ta'ala and His Messenger).

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) described such a heart as dead. Such a dead heart can neither appreciate nor enjoy the ultimate Reality. It is also unaware of its most pitiable and miserable condition, hence feels false happiness which is illusory with no comparison to the real one.

2. Avoidance of pollution of Qalb by the filth of sins

If a piece of wood is taken near the fire, it will burn, whether one intends to burn it or not. Similarly, when one commits a sin, it stains the heart and makes it impure whether he wishes it or not. If a person misuses his eyes, i.e., gazes at those ladies whom he is not allowed to look at as per Shariah, even without bad intentions, will cause a stain on his Qalb, thus making it impure. Similarly if a person talks ill about others, this will ruin his heart. These sins are like cyanide, anybody taking it will die, whether he intends to die or not. Those people whose spiritual sense of smell (extra sensory perception of smell) is functioning do feel the awful bad (repugantly foul) smell of sins. The angels having much finer perception of things feel the foul smell of sins, hence most of the angels of mercy leave the company of such a person and curse him.

A great man in Islamic History Hadhrat Imâm Abu Haniefah (RA) had such an inner vision that he could see the sins of people which were getting washed off from them while performing ablution (Wudhu). He therefore

decreed that the water falling down from the parts of body being washed during Wudhu, is not pure. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said in a Hadith that Allah Ta'ala does not see towards the external appearance of people but towards their hearts and their intentions. When hearts are impure and filled with filth, they cannot receive the pure Eternal Light (Nur) necessary for understanding the divine revelation – the Holy Qur'ân and for perceiving the ultimate Reality.

After having firm faith in Allah Ta'ala, it is imperative to avoid all sins, major or minor, in order to protect the capability of Qalb to understand the Qur'an. One may read thousands of books including great commentaries of the Qur'ân, he cannot even smell the fragrance of the purest Divine revelation of al-Qur'ân.

3. Remembrance of Allah Ta'ala (Zikrullah):

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) says in a Hadith that:

"The Qalb which is in the remembrance of Allah Ta'ala is live and the Qalb which is careless of it is as good as dead". (Bukhâri & Muslim Sharief)

Allah Ta'ala says in the Qur'ân:

قُلُوبُهُمْ لَلْغَاسِقِ يَاقُونَ

مُؤْمِنِينَ

"Woe to those whose hearts are hardened against the remembrance of Allah Ta'ala! They are manifestly wandering (in error)!" (39:22)

Hafiz Ibn Taymiya (RA) says that Zikrullah is so much necessary for heart as water is necessary for fish. Imagine the condition of a fish without water. It has already been mentioned that the receptors for appreciating the divine light and the Ultimate Reality are in the Qalb and that they get fogged by the sins, and totally blocked by the dark clouds of Kufr (Atheism). To remove this fog or dark clouds from the receptors of Qalb one needs two things:

1) Irrigation by the water of Zikr.

2) Heat of Muhabbat (Love).

One needs these two things in the same way as one needs them for a tree from which one wants to have fruits. The tree to flourish and to bear fruit, needs enough irrigation and the sunlight.

Hazif Ibn Qayyim (RA), a well-known Muhadith (A scholar of traditions), has written an authentic book, 'Al-Waabilus Sayyib', on the virtues of Zikr, which are more than one hundred and he has listed seventy nine of these, which are briefly given below in the same order. Some of these include multiple benefits, in that case their actual number exceeds more than one hundred:

- 1) Zikr keeps away the Shaitân and weakens his strength.
- 2) It is the cause of Almighty Allah Ta'ala's pleasure.
- 3) It relieves the mind from anxieties and worries.
- 4) It produces joy and happiness in the heart.
- 5) It strengthens the body and mind.
- 6) It brightens the face and heart.
- 7) It attracts one's sustenance.
- 8) It invests the Zâkirs with awe and sweetness so that the beholder is filled with awe and pleasure at his sight.
- 9) It induces love for Allah Ta'ala, which in fact is the spirit of Islam and the pivot of Deen (religion), and the source of success and salvation in the Hereafter. He who seeks access to the love of Almighty Allah Ta'ala should do Zikr profusely. Just as reading and repetition is the door of knowledge, so Zikr of Allah Ta'ala is the gateway of His love.

10) Zikr involves Muraqabah (transcendental meditation) through which one reaches the stage of Ihsân, wherein a person worships Almighty Allah Ta'ala as if he is actually seeing Him. (The attainment of this stage of Ihsân is the ultimate objective of the Sufis).

11) It helps in realization of Allah Ta'ala so that by and by a stage is reached when he comes to regard Almighty Allah Ta'ala as his sole Cherisher, Guardian and Master, and he turns unto Him, in all afflictions.

12) It is the key to the nearness of Almighty Allah Ta'ala. More abundant the Zikr, more one will get nearer to Allah Ta'ala, and greater the indifference to Zikr, greater will be the distance from Him.

13) It opens the doors of realization (Ma'arifat) of Allah Ta'ala.

14) It makes one to realize the greatness and grandeur of Almighty Allah Ta'ala, and strengthens the consciousness of His omni-presence.

15) Zikr of Allah Ta'ala causes one's mention in the court of Allah Ta'ala, as is mentioned in the Holy Book (Al-Qur'ân):

" Remember me, and I will remember you." (2:152)

And as stated in the Hadith:

“Whosoever remembers Me in his heart. I remember him in My heart”.
(Bukhâri & Muslim Sharief)

It has already been explained under other verses and Ahâdith that, even if there were no other good points in Zikr, except those mentioned above, this alone would have established its superiority over others. Nevertheless, there are many more virtues and benefits of Zikr.

16) It gives life to the heart. Hafiz Ibn Taimiyah (RA) says that Zikr is so much necessary for the heart as water for the fish. Imagine the condition of a fish out of water.

17) It is food for the heart and soul; to deprive them of Zikr is like depriving the body of its food.

18) It cleanses the heart of its rust. It has been mentioned in the Hadith; everything rusts according to its nature; and the heart rusts with worldly desires and indifference; to purify it, Zikr is necessary.

19) It safeguards against pitfalls and lapses.

20) The heart of neglectful person is tormented by a feeling of remoteness from Allah Ta'ala, and nothing other than Zikr can rid off the heart from this feeling.

21) The words of Zikr keep circulating round the Arsh of Almighty, as stated in a Hadith.

22) If one remembers Allah Ta'ala in happiness, Almighty Allah Ta'ala remembers him in his afflictions.

23) It is a means of deliverance from Allah Ta'ala's punishment.

24) It causes Allah Ta'ala's peace and mercy to descend, while angels surround the person engaged in Zikr.

25) It saves one's tongue from indulging in backbiting, loose talk, lies, and abuses. It is a common experience that a man whose tongue remains engaged in Zikr does not commit these absurdities. On the other hand, a tongue that is not busy in Zikr, falls an easy prey to all kinds of useless talk.

26) The gatherings of Zikr are the gatherings of angels, and gatherings without Zikr are gatherings of Satan. A person is free to have a choice between the two, and verily a man, by instinct, is drawn towards what suits to his temperament.

27) By virtue of Zikr, the Zâkir is blessed and also the person sitting by him. Similarly, the indolent person is accursed for his indolence and also the person sitting by him.

28) Zikr will save one from despair on the Day of Judgement. This is confirmed by one of the Ahâdith which says that the gathering devoid of Allah Ta'ala's Zikr will cause sorrow and losses on that Day.

29) If Zikr is accompanied by tears and loneliness, the Zâkir will be blessed under the shadow of Allah Ta'ala's Throne on the Day of Judgement when hearts will jump to lips due to agony of intolerable heat of that Day.

30) Those who remain busy in Zikr are better rewarded by Allah Ta'ala than those who remain busy in Dua (prayer) and supplication. According to one Hadith, Almighty Allah Ta'ala says that "I will reward one better who is engrossed in Zikr than the one who is busy in making Dua".

31) In spite of the fact that Zikr is the easiest form of worship (the movement of the tongue being easier than the movement of any other part of the body), All the same it is the most virtuous form.

32) Allah Ta'ala's Zikr helps the plants of Paradise to grow.

33) Of all the actions, the reward and forgiveness promised for Zikr is the highest. According to a Hadith, if on any day a person repeats the following words one hundred times:

قَدِيرٌ شَيْءٌ عَلَى هُوَ لَهُ الْمَلِكُ لَهُ شَرِيكٌ إِلَهٌ

"There is none worthy of worship except Allah Ta'ala, the One. There is no partner with Him; His is the kingdom, and for Him is all praise, and He is All-powerful to do everything."

He is rewarded as much as for freeing ten slaves, and in addition one hundred virtues are written in his account and one hundred sins are forgiven. He remains protected against the devil throughout the day, and none is considered as having acted better than him except one who has recited the same words more often than he did. Similarly, there are many other Ahâdith proclaiming the superiority of Zikr over all other good deeds.

34) Due to incessant Zikr one does not forget his own soul. Forgetting one's soul leads to failure in both the worlds, because forgetting the remembrance of Allah Ta'ala leads to neglecting one's own soul and all its best interests. Allah Ta'ala says in His book:

هُمُ أَنْفُسَهُمْ فَأَنْسَاهُمْ كَالَّذِينَ

“And be not ye as those who forgot Allah Ta'ala and therefore He caused them to forget their souls. Such are the evil-doers”.(59:19)

Thus, when one forgets his own soul, he becomes careless and forgets his real interests, which leads to his ruin in the same way as a garden or field is invariably ruined when its owner fails to look after it. To remain protected from this ruin, one should keep his tongue always busy in Zikr to such an extent that it (zikr) becomes indispensable for him in such a way as water is for thirsty, food for hungry or a house and clothes for the needy. As a matter of fact, one should be more mindful towards Zikr than any of these material necessities which are a small loss if lost as compared with the spiritual death.

35) Zikr is the source of one's spiritual elevation whether one is engaged in it while in bed or in the market, in good health or in sickness, or even when one is enjoying most of the pleasures of life. Nothing but Zikr can take a man to such spiritual heights whereby his heart is so illuminated with the radiance of Zikr that even while asleep he is more wakeful than a neglectful person who is awake all the night.

36) The Noor (radiance) of Zikr remains with a person in his life as well as in his grave. It will guide him on the Sirât in the Hereafter. Almighty Allah Ta'ala says in the Quran:

زُيِّنَ مِثْلَهُ لَيْسَ مِنْهَا بِعِمْشِرِي لَهُ قَادِحِينَاهُ مَيِّنَا
يَعْمَلُونَ لِلْكَافِرِينَ

“Can he who was dead and whom We gave life, and a light whereby he can walk among men, be like him who is in utter darkness whence he cannot emerge?” (6:122)

The one mentioned first is the faithful, who believes in Allah Ta'ala and shines with the light of His love, Zikr, and cognizance, while the second one is devoid of all these virtues. In reality this radiance is a great blessing and leads to perfect success. That is why Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) used to beg in prolonged prayers for it to circulate in every part of his body. As mentioned in Ahâdith, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) prayed that Almighty Allah Ta'ala may bless his flesh, bones, muscles, hair skin, eyes and ears with Noor, and that he may be surrounded with Noor on all sides; he even prayed that he may be blessed with Noor from top to bottom, and that his whole person may be transmitted into Noor. One's deeds will shine according to the Noor in oneself so much that the good deeds of some people (while going to heaven) will shine like the Sun. Similar Noor will be found in their faces on the Day of Judgement.

37) Zikr is the basic principle of Tasawuf (Sufism) and is invoked in all the schools of Sufism. A person who gets conversant with Zikr enters the gateway of Almighty Allah Ta'ala, from Whom he will get whatever he wishes, for Allah Ta'ala's treasures are unlimited.

38) There is not a single corner in the heart of a man which cannot be filled but with Zikr. When Zikr controls the heart, not only does it fill up this corner but also leads the Zâkir to that kind of contentment which any amount of wealth would fail to produce. Such a person gets respect among people, which his family or party fails to bring about. He earns such a control over people that a sovereign would never dream of. On the other hand, disgrace descends over an indolent in spite of all his wealth and riches, party, strength and powers.

39) Zikr transforms distraction into concentration, remoteness into nearness. This means that one gets relieved of troubles, worries and fears, and is blessed with peace of mind. His mistakes and sins are forgiven, and the devils who are after him are dispersed away. It makes him to remember that the Hereafter is not far away, and the worldly life has little attraction for him.

40) Zikr does not allow one's heart to suffer from forgetfulness, which leads to ignoring one's ultimate interest.

41) Zikr is just like a tree whose fruit is realization of Almighty Allah Ta'ala. More a person engages himself in the Zikr, stronger shall grow the root of this tree and more abundant will it bear the fruits.

42) Zikr of Almighty Allah Ta'ala promotes nearness to Him and thereby one earns His constant patronage. It is mentioned in the Quran.

هُمُ الَّذِينَ
الَّذِينَ

“For Allah Ta'ala is with those who restrain themselves and those who do good” (16:128)

It is stated in one Hadith:

ذَكَرَنِي

“I am with my slave who remembers Me”. (Bukhâri Sharief)

According to another Hadith, Allah Ta’ala says,

“Those who remember Me are My men, and I do not deprive them of My mercy. When they repent, I Am their friend, but when they do not repent. I Am their physician. I put them to worries to condone their sins.”

The nearness to Allah Ta’ala that is developed due to excessive Zikr has no parallel. No words and no writing can describe this nearness. Its taste is known only to those who are blessed with it. (May Almighty Allah Ta’ala also bless me with the same).

43) Zikr of Allah Ta’ala is as meritorious as it is to liberate slaves, to spend in charity, and to perform Jihâd in the path of Allah Ta’ala.

(Many virtues of this kind have already been described and more will further be narrated in this book).

44) Zikr is the fundamental form of thanksgiving to Almighty Allah Ta’ala. One who does not perform Zikr cannot thank Him. It is stated in Hadith that Hadhrat Musa (AS) had asked Allah Ta’ala,

"O My Lord! You have done me countless favours, teach me the manner in which I should thank you befittingly."

Allah Ta'ala says:

"The more you perform Zikr, the more thanks you offer."

According to another Hadith, Hadhrat Musa u is reported to have said,

"O, Lord! how can I offer thanks worthy of Your greatness."

Allah Ta'ala replied:

"Let your tongue be always engaged in Zikr."

45) According to Allah Ta'ala, the best of the pious people are those who always remain busy in Zikr, because piety leads to paradise, and Zikr to the nearness to Allah Ta'ala.

46) There is a sort of hardness in the human heart which does not get softened by anything except Zikr.

47) In fact, Zikr is a remedy for all the ills of heart.

48) Zikr of Allah Ta'ala is the root of His love, and neglecting Zikr is the root of His enmity.

49) Nothing is more effective than Zikr in attracting Allah Ta'ala's blessings and in warding off His chastisement.

50) Almighty Allah Ta'ala grants His grace to those who perform Zikr, and the angels pray for them.

51) One who wants to remain in the gardens of Paradise, even in this life, should sit in gathering of Zikr, because these are like the gardens of Paradise.

52) Gatherings of Zikr are also the gatherings of angels.

53) In the presence of angels, Almighty Allah Ta'ala praises those who perform Zikr.

54) One who is constant in performing Zikr will enter Paradise in high spirits.

55) All good deeds are attained because of Zikr.

56) A good deed becomes superior to others of its kind because of Zikr. Of the fasts, the one with more Zikr is the best; Of the Hajj, one with excessive Zikr is more virtuous. Similar is the case with other good deeds like Jihâd etc.

57) Zikr is a substitute of Nafl Salâh and other non-obligatory devotions. It is related in one Hadith that the poor people once complained to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) of the higher reward available to the rich because of their wealth.

They said, "These rich men offer prayers and fast just as we do, but they excel us by performing Umrah and Hajj, and by taking part in Jihâd on account of their wealth."

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) replied: "Should I tell you something, so that none except one who practices it can excel you." He then advised them to recite:

اَكْبَرُ - اللهُ - سَبْحَانَ

after every Salâh. (Bukhâri Sharief)

By this, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has indicated the importance of Zikr to be the substitute for various kinds of worship, like Umrah, Hajj, Jihâd etc.

58) Zikr is very helpful to all other forms of worship. Excessive Zikr creates love for various forms of worship and one starts taking delight in performing them and never feels bored or burdened.

59) Zikr is a solution to all the difficulties, and a good remedy for all kinds of misery. It lightens every burden, and relieves every affliction

60) Zikr dispels every fear of the heart It has a special hand in inducing peace of mind and for relieving the heart of its fear. To free the heart of its fears and mind of its perplexity is one of the specific qualities of Zikr. Therefore greater the amount of Zikr , greater is the freedom from fear.

61) By virtue of Zikr, one is blessed with the Divine help in all his doings. That is why sometimes a man achieves such distinctions which are beyond his capacity and he attains what evidently seems beyond his reach. Once Hadhrat Fatimah (RA) complained to Rasulullah's (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) of excessive fatigue due to grinding of wheat and other domestic drudgery. She requested that a 'domestic help' may be arranged for her. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) advised her to recite 'Subhân Allah Ta'ala' and 'Alhamdu Lillah' each thirty three times and 'Allah Ta'alau Akbar' thirty four times. The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) further said to her: "The recitation of these Kalimas is better for you than a servant". (Abu Dawood Sharief)

62) Those who are working for Hereafter are in a race, wherein the Zâkirs shall remain ahead of all on account of the Zikr. Umar Maula Ghufra (RA) says that 'on the Day of Judgement when people will be rewarded for their good deeds many will repent why they neglected Zikr when it was the

easiest of all the good deeds and highest in reward. In a Hadith, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is quoted to have said:

“The Mufarrideen have surpassed all” .

He was asked:

“Who were the Mufarrideen?”

The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) replied:

“Those who toil hard for Zikr because it lightens their burdens” . (Muslim Sharief)

63) Those who perform Zikr are deemed truthful by Almighty Allah Ta’ala and those who are testified as such by Almighty Allah Ta’ala will not be raised with the liars on the Day of Judgement. It is quoted on the authority of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) that when a man utters:

الله أكبر

Allah Ta’ala proclaims:

“My slave has spoken the truth, and nobody is worthy of Worship except I, and I am the Greatest of all.”

64) While being engaged in Zikr the angels remain busy in constructing houses in Paradise for the performers. When Zikr is stopped, the angels also stop construction of the houses. When asked why a particular construction was stopped by the angels, they reply, “The construction had to be stopped because funds for that were stopped. The fact is confirmed by a Hadith, which reads when a man recites seven times:

العظيم سبحان بحمده سبحان

A tower is raised for him in the Paradise.

65) Zikr provides protection against the Hell fire. If, due to any misdeed a Zâkir deserves the Hell, his Zikr acts as defense against the Hell. The more his Zikr is, the stronger will be this defense.

66) The angels pray for the forgiveness of Zâkireen (those who are engaged in Zikr). It is related on the authority of Hadhrat Amr bin Aas (RA) that when a person says:

بحمده سبحان العالمين الله

the angels pray to Almighty Allah Ta’ala for his forgiveness.

67) Any place whether a mountain or plain on which Zikr is recited, feels proud of it. According to a Hadith, one mountain asks another if any Zâkir has crossed over it during the day, if the reply is in the affirmative, it feels happy.

68) Zikr guarantees immunity from hypocrisy, for Almighty Allah Ta'ala has described the hypocrite as:

قليلًا يذكرون

They do not remember Allah Ta'ala except very rarely. It is also related on the authority of Ka'b Ahbâr (RA) that he who performs frequent Zikr of Allah Ta'ala is free from hypocrisy.

69) Compared with other good deeds, Zikr carries a special taste which is not found in any other action. Even if there were no other virtues of Zikr, this fine taste alone would have been a sufficient reward to justify it. Maalik bin Deenâr (RA) has said that nothing surpasses the taste of Zikr, which is the best and finest.

70) The faces of those who perform Zikr remain illumine in this life, and will carry a special radiance in the Hereafter.

71) One who is frequently engaged in Zikr while sitting, standing, walking or in any other position, will find this earth testifying his act on the Day of

Judgement. The day when the earth will throw out all that it knows. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) asked his companions if they had any knowledge about what will that news. They expressed their ignorance. Then Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "Whatever deed is done good or bad, by any man or woman on the face of the earth, it (the earth) will narrate everything with date, time and place". Hence, one who performs Zikr at whatever place he is will find number of witnesses in his favour.

72) As long as the tongue is busy in Zikr, it is saved from indulging in lies, backbiting or any other kind of evil talk. The tongue will engage itself in useless talk if it is not in Zikr. Same is the case with the heart; if it is devoid of the love for Almighty Allah Ta'ala, it will get filled with the love of worldly things.

73) The devils are outright enemies of man and always create trouble for him and keep him surrounded. The miserable condition of one who remains surrounded by enemies can well be imagined; especially when the enemies are vindictive and everyone of them wants to surpass the other in troubling him. Nothing except Zikr can protect him against these enemies. Many forms of Dua (prayer) are mentioned in the Ahâdith, so that, if any of these is recited by a person, then Satan dare not come near him. If the same is recited at the time of going to bed, one remains safe from Satan throughout the night.

Hafiz Ibn Qayyim (RA) has also mentioned many such Duas (prayers). In addition to these he has also mentioned in detail under six headings relative merits of Zikr as also some of the virtues, which are specific to Zikr alone. Then he has also given seventy five chapters of specific Duas

(prayers), which are suited to specific times and occasions. For the sake of brevity, these have been excluded from this book. For those blessed with determination to act, the virtues of Zikr detailed above are more than enough, and for those who are disinclined to act, thousands of such virtues would be of little avail.

(Quoted from Fadhail Aa'mal)

of some sort of light or Nur. As eyes, though normal, are functionless in the darkness so is Qalb functionless in the spiritual darkness. Thus a person, whose Qalb is enveloped in darkness, has very limited range of thinking and has highly narrowed inner vision.

Maulana Abdul Gani Phulpuri (RA) states in the Tafsir (elucidation) of this that since Zikrullah is a Nur, it illuminates and enlightens the Zakir's Qalb and removes darkness from it. When the Qalb gets illuminated and enlightened, its range of vision increases tremendously. It now starts thinking in the creation of the skies and the earth, from the stage of Zikr, he gets elevated to the next higher stage which is called the stage of speculation (Fikr), His Fikr was dead, now it has got revived because of Zikr.

Mukam-i-Fikr (The stage of speculation):

This is the second stage in the spiritual ascendance of a Mu'min (believer). This is the higher faculty of Qalb having wide ranging capabilities. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) stated in a Hadith that Tafakur (process of Fikr) for a moment is better than sixty or seventy years of Ibâdat (worshipping). So one can imagine the value of Fikr. This Fikr can be compared with the word 'Shaheen (falcon)' often used by Alama Dr. Sir Mohammad Iqbal (RA) in his poetry. He addresses to the Mu'min as, "O Mu'min, you have the faculty of Fikr. So you are Shaheen (eagle). You just cannot contend yourself with this world alone. You cannot confine yourself to this world as you are Shaheen, your reach is beyond the skies, your goal is much higher than the skies".

He gives an example of two birds, crow and falcon (Shaheen) and says that their worlds are different. Both of them start flight and take off together in the same space for their onward journey. While flying when a crow sees any filth lying somewhere on the ground it forgets his flight and his goal and comes down and gets busy with eating this filthy substance. On the other hand a falcon never looks back, it sees many beautiful things on its way but never becomes greedy, it never gives up its flight but moves towards its set goal, which is very high beyond one's imagination. On the prolonged journey whenever this falcon becomes a little tired and needs some refreshment so as to keep its blood warm, it pounces on its prey but leaves it immediately, it again pounces on it and again leaves it alone. Alama Iqbal says that this Shaheen does so only to keep its blood warm otherwise it has nothing to do with its prey. Even most precious (worldly) things do not deviate it from its journey.

جیتا پتھر جیتا پتھا

بہانا اک کار کھنہ گرم لہ

Keeping above mentioned example in mind, one can think of a person who forgets his flight, which he ought to have undertaken in order to attain the heights of manliness for which he was sent to this world. This person can be compared to that crow who forgets his flight on seeing the filthy matter. This person forgets his flight and remains busy throughout his whole precious life in collecting the filthy matter of the world.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) says in a Hadith:

جيفة الدنيا

"The world is filth"

On the other hand the real believer (Mu'min) is like an Shaheen. He does not make the accumulation of material things his goal but entirely dedicates himself to the real purpose of humanity. He soars higher and higher in this objective. He does not leave this world and adopt what is called renunciation (Rahbaaniyat), but he uses this world as a means to achieve his ultimate goal like a Shaheen who pounces upon its prey just as to keep its blood warm. This great lesson we learn from the Qur'ân and Hadith. Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) used to invoke to Allah Ta'ala in these words:

بالتقوى الاخرتي على ديني على اللهم

"O Allah Ta'ala! help me in my Deen (religion) by the Duniya (World) and in my Aakhirat (Hereafter) by Taqwa (Piety)."

Here one can understand that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) teaches us that the worldly gains are also of importance for a believer (Mu'min) but, of course with a difference i.e., it is not ultimate goal of a believer (Mu'min) but is a means of achieving the real goal, that is why Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) asks Allah Ta'ala to help us in Deen (religion) by Duniya (world) and not vice verse.

ی جوانوں و ہوت ی ی

ی آسمانوں میں انکو آتی نظر

Here again, Alama Iqbal refers to the same faculty of Fikr, if it gets enlightened in a believer (Mu'min), he gets elevated and his outlook changes entirely. This huge world which he was previously fascinated with, now looks very small to him and he feels suffocated if kept confined to these worldly affairs. He now understands that Allah Ta'ala has bestowed him with a great potential. He now realises that he has to explore himself, he has to exploit this great potential. If he exerts, gets proper guidance and has enough courage necessary for this purpose, he simply becomes a real great man. There are no words to express this greatness. It is well said "know thyself, that is all".

Coming back to the point under discussion, Allah Ta'ala in the above quoted Aayat, first mentions Zikr and then Fikr. He says that those who are in remembrance of Allah Ta'ala while standing, sitting or lying down positions i.e., always, make Fikr (i.e., ponder) in the creation of skies and the earth. Implying thereby that it is the Nur of this Zikr which illuminates and enlightens the Qalb of a man and he gets engaged in Fikr. This faculty of his Qalb i.e., Fikr, becomes much enlightened and attains so much height that it realises the real purpose of this universe. A common person void of the enlightened Qalb believes that Allah Ta'ala has created this universe and that it is not useless, but this belief is very weak and highly generalised. On the other hand, a believer (Mu'min) whose Qalb gets enlightened by Zikr understands the purpose of the creation of this universe in the real sense of the word. He sees the reason of the creation of the universe through the eyes of belief (Yaqin). This thing can be

appreciated only after one achieves it himself. These things cannot be expressed in words.

Allah Ta'ala says in the same Aayat that believers (Mu'minîn) whose excellence is that they always remain in Zikr, make Fikr (i.e., ponder) on the creation of the skies and the earth and (after realising the purpose of the creation of the universe by eyes of Yaqîn) then they say (from the core of their hearts):

هَذَا

"Our Lord not for naught hast thou created (all)! Glory to Thee! Give us salvation from the chastisement of the fire". (3:191)

We can say that it is the conclusion of their research work which they had started in the Fikr of universe. These people are the scientists of Islam, no other research is as high and as useful as theirs. May Allah Ta'ala make us to understand this claim of Muslim spiritual scholars.

"(Our Lord not for naught hast Thou created (all))" - this is being proved constantly by the modern scientific researches which are revealing the utility of different constituents of this universe every now and then. These Scientific discoveries in fact constitute a very small fraction of this absolute Reality which these Muslim Scholars have realised.

Chapter 7 - Tafakkur

Sahâbah Kirâm (RA) used to say that indeed 'Nur of Imân is Tafakkur (meditation)'. Different Ibâdât (i.e., acts of worship) are being performed by us with the help of different parts of our body and Tafakkur is the Ibâdat of Qalb. Take the example of a manual labourer. He sweats blood in scorching heat and biting cold during the day and gets fifty or sixty rupees in the evening. On the other hand, for example a doctor earns hundred rupees just with a single stroke of his pen by writing a small prescription. Similarly, a businessman can earn thousands just by saying only few words and a king can earn millions just by a phone call or the like. Higher the status, lesser is the energy spent in doing a job and much higher is the reward. Taking the same analogy, Qalb is the king of the various parts of the body and hand, feet etc are just like the labourers. Ibâdat of labourers (hand, feet, etc) will involve more energy but will fetch less reward and the Ibâdat of Qalb will involve less energy but much higher reward or Thawaab. Unfortunately, Muslims in general are unaware of the Ibâdat of Qalb.

Why Ambiya (AS) and Awliya (RA) were not easily recognized by the people of their times

In general, people usually do not recognise the Ambiya u or Awliya (RA) of their times. They think that these people (i.e, Ambiya and Awliya) are having nothing special or extra than themselves They see them as common men without any extra-ordinary possession. The reason for this misunderstanding is simple; the common people only see their physical character and are totally ignorant about their interior status and condition

of their hearts (Quloob). Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) used to say:

"My eyes sleep, my Qalb does not sleep". (Mishkat Sharief)

Abu Jahal and his associates failed to understand this, as they looked only at the physical personality Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) which in no way appeared special or superior to them. They never tried to look deep into the real personage of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).

Similarly, people ordinarily fail to recognise a Wali-i-Kaamil, because physically he is no different than the common people. Whole Ummah is unified at this point that after Ambiya-al-Kirâm u Hadhrat Abu Bakr Siddiq (RA) is the greatest man. He is superior to all Sahâbah al-Kirâm (RA). You will agree with me that this greatness of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (RA) was not because of the fact that he was offering more Nafl Salâh (non-obligatory prayers) than rest of the Sahâbah, or he was keeping more fasts than others or he was performing any other Ibâdat-i-Zâhiriyyah (perceivable worship) more than others did. There is no such evidence present in Ahâdith or Islamic history. Therefore, the question automatically arises as to what had elevated his status over others? The answer is simple, the status of his Qalb, his interior condition and the range of his Fikr surpassed all others.

Depth of Tafakkur of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (RA)

The last Surah which was revealed to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) as a whole was the Surah-An-Nasr-110. This Surah was revealed only a few months before the passing away of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) Rabi 1, A.H. 11. The place was either the precincts of Makkah at his farewell pilgrimage (الوداع), Zulhijja A.H.10, or Madinah after his return from the farewell Pilgrimage.

In this Surah Allah Ta'ala says:

إِنَّهُ () دِينَ يَدْخُلُونَ وَرَأَيْدٍ ()
()

"When comes the Help of Allah Ta'ala and Victory, And thou dost see the people enter the Allah Ta'ala's Religion in crowds, Celebrate the praises of thy Lord! and pray for His Forgiveness: For He is Oft-Returning. (in forgiveness)". (110:1-3)

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) recited this Surah to Sahâbah al-Kirâm (AS), and then said in his Khutba (sermon) that Allah Ta'ala has given authority to his slaves to choose between this 'World' and the 'Aakhira' (Hereafter) and he (i.e., Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)) chose the latter. On hearing this, Hadhrat Abu Bakr Siddiq (RA) started weeping. No other Sahaabi except probably Ibn Abbas (RA) could understand the hidden message in this Surah and the reason why Abu Bakr (RA) wept. It was the range of Abu Bakr's (RA) Tafakkur or inner

vision only which could reach to the real depth of the meaning. Since in this Surah Allah Ta'ala commanded Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) to engage himself in Istigaffar (pray for His forgiveness). Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said that he opted for Aakhirah (Hereafter), Hadhrat Abu Bakr (RA) understood that these Aayaat carried the message of departure of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) from this world in near future, though this type of message does not apparently seem to be revealed. What made Hadhrat Abu Bakr (RA) comprehend from these lines the real message when most of the Sahâbah failed to do so, though all of them were Arabs and well versed in Arabic language?

From this, one can easily draw the inference that only knowing Arabic and reading Tafaaseer (commentaries of Qur'ân) is not enough to understand the real message of the Quran. Something more is needed to attain it. What is that – keep on pondering.

Fehm-i-Qur'ân of Hadhrat Ibn Abbas (RA)

Once Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was returning after attending the call of nature. He found Hadhrat Ibn-Abbass (RA) waiting outside with a jug of water so that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) could make Istinja and Wudhu (Ablution). Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was very much pleased with this action of Hadhrat Ibn Abbas (RA), he moved his merciful hand over his head and gave him blessings with these words:

“O, Allah Ta'ala teach him (Ibn Abbas) meaning (of the Quran)”.
(Mishkaat)

It was due to the blessings of this Dua (prayer) of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) that Hadhrat Ibn Abbas (RA) attained a highly distinguished place in the row of commentators of the Qur'ân and became famous as Sayyid-ul-Mufasssireen (Head of the commentators of the Quran).

How is it possible that one can become a great commentator of the Qur'ân by the blessings of a Dua (prayer) of somebody else? It is obvious that due to this Dua (prayer) he did not read more books which taught him the meanings of the Qur'ân but due to the blessings of this Dua (Prayer), Allah Ta'ala enlightened his Qalb thus making it capable of utilizing its faculty of Fikr to understand the divine message of the Qur'ân in its real perspective. Due to the blessings of this Dua (prayer), all the locks of his Qalb were smashed and any haze or cloud was cleared away from it. Hadhrat Ibn Abbas (RA) himself narrates that irrespective of the fact that he was very young, Hadhrat Umar (RA) used to make him sit with elderly Badri Sahâbah (those who had taken part in Battle of Badr). Some of them even used to object to Hadhrat Umar (RA) for this. One day Hadhrat Umar (RA) called all of them and also Hadhrat Ibn Abbas (RA). He asked all the Sahâbah present there to explain him the meaning of the same Surah – An-Nasr. They interpreted it in many ways. Hadhrat Ibn Abbas (RA) told him that in this Surah, the message of the departure of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) from this world was revealed. Hadhrat Umar (RA) liked this answer very much and all the Sahâbah y present there also realised the extraordinary ability of Hadhrat Ibn Abbas (RA) to understand the Qur'ân.

Incident of Hadhrat Maulana Yaqoob Nanotvi (RA)

Hadhrat Maulana Yaqoob Nanotvi (RA) was the first head teacher of Darul Uloom Deoband, India. He narrates an incident that once he was reciting Surah Al-Muzzammil in Fajr Salâh (The morning Prayer). While reciting this Surah,, he did not know how he could survive. He says that his chest got expanded and the secrets of this Surah got manifested to him which he could tolerated with great difficulty. He later on, came to know that this was because of Hadhrat Maulana Qasim Nanotvi (RA), the founder of Deoband, who during that time had been contemplating towards him. He was astonished to know that if contemplation of a person can induce such treasures in another's chest, what treasure-house could his own chest be?

From this incident as well it follows that the seat of understanding the Qur'ân is Qalb and to understand the Qur'ân one has to take care of his Qalb and realise that unimaginable treasures are hidden in the Qur'ân. May Allah Ta'ala bestow upon us these treasures!

Chapter 8 - Remembrance of Allah Ta'ala as a cause of revivification (Ihya) of Qalb.

Whom to remember?

Significance of any particular thing is understood by its relation with some other thing. If a thing 'A' to which a particular thing 'B' is related, is great, it becomes easy to realize the greatness of 'A'. On the other hand if a thing 'A' to which a particular thing 'B' is related, is ordinary one, it is taken ordinarily. For example; a person arrives at the gate of an office and tries to enter it at a time when the entry into that office is not allowed; the gatekeeper does not allow this person to enter and pushes him out, sometimes even disgracefully. Some other person, who recognizes the person who had arrived at the gate, tells the gatekeeper in a very low voice that this person is the chief boss of your office. On hearing this, the gatekeeper loses all his wits and starts perspiring, his voice fumbles, he staggers, his body starts shivering and it takes him some time to regain his senses. Now, ponder for some moments as to why this gatekeeper was overtaken by this sudden change. At one moment he was pushing the person out and at other moment he was shivering in front of the same person. Obviously, the reason is that previously he was not knowing him and afterwards he come to know his reality. Similarly, a person who does not know the value of a diamond and cannot differentiate a diamond from an ordinary stone, treats both the same way, they both look similar to him. When somebody else tells this person the value of a diamond and what kind of treasure he owes, one can easily understand how he will now treat this diamond which he was treating as an ordinary stone just a moment before. Again the same reason, that is at the first instance he was not

knowing the real value of this diamond, but after coming to know its value his attitude towards the same thing changes considerably.

From these examples we can understand that one recognises and appreciates the significance of a particular thing only after obtaining the relevant knowledge about that thing. This knowledge of a particular thing is known as Ma'ârifat of that thing.

In the same way, to recognise and appreciate the treasures contained in the glorious Qur'ân, it is mandatory to obtain the Ma'ârifat of the Revealer of the Qur'ân – Allah Ta'ala. This is the reason why most of the people remain ignorant about the immense treasures of the Qur'ân, simply because they either fail to understand or do not try at all to understand as to Whose message this Qur'ân is? It is not enough to say that we know that this is the message of Allah Ta'ala. Had we been true in our claim, our attitude towards the Qur'ân would have been entirely different.

Allah Ta'ala says in the Qur'ân:

يَخْشَى

"From amongst His slaves those truly fear Allah Ta'ala, who have knowledge". (35:28)

Obviously, these learned people fear Allah Ta'ala because they have attained knowledge (Ma'ârifat) about Him. In outer nature, we can

understand and appreciate through number of colours the finest shades and gradations, but in the spiritual world things are even more subtle and more comprehensive. Who can truly understand it? Only Allah Ta'ala's slaves, who know, i.e., who have the inner knowledge which they attain thro7 acquaintance with the spiritual world. It is only such people who truly appreciate the inner world, and it is they who know that the fear of Allah Ta'ala is the beginning of wisdom. For, such a fear is akin to appreciation and love, appreciation of all the marvelous beauties of Allah Ta'ala's outer and inner world, ("Allah Ta'ala is exalted in might") and love because of His grace and kindness ("Oft-forgiving"). But Allah Ta'ala's forgiving extends to many who do not truly understand Him.

The most knowledgeable person in the human history having the highest degree of the Ma'ârifat (knowledge) was Hadhrat Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and at the same time he feared Allah Ta'ala the most. It is narrated in Ahâdith that when Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) used to recite the Qur'ân in Salah, a sound like that of boiling of something in a utensil emerged from his chest due to the fear of Allah Ta'ala . You can imagine the amount of fear Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was having of Allah Ta'ala, simply because he was knowing Him much more than anybody else.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) used to weep for whole nights before Allah Ta'ala while reciting the Qur'ân in Qiyaam (standing) in Salâh. Allah Ta'ala had made him the greatest amongst the mankind but irrespective of that he was felt himself the humblest creature before the Greatness of Allah Ta'ala.

وَهَبِ الطَّاهِرِ صَلَّى- اللَّهُمَّ	وَأَنْهَا وَأَخَيْرَ لَوْ نُنْتَغَيْرَ تَخَيَّلْتُ يَا لَعَلَّهُ « » ه)	يُحَدِّثُ يُجِ صَلَّى- بِهِ (الرَّيْحُ بِهِ وَجْهِهِ هَذَا أَوْ دِينَهُمْ
			وَسَلَّمَ عَلَيْهِ فِيهَا عَنْهُ أَوْ دِينَهُمْ

'Ata' b. Abi Rabah reported that he heard 'A'isha, the wife of the Apostle of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), as saying: When there was on any day windstorm or dark cloud (its effects) could be read on the face of the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him), and he moved forward and backward (in a state of anxiety) ; and when it rained, he was delighted and it (the state of restlessness) disappeared. 'A'isha said: I asked him the reason of this anxiety and he said: I was afraid that it might be a calamity that might fall upon my Ummah, and when he saw rainfall he said: It is the mercy (of Allah).

It is narrated that when Satan (Shaitân) was cursed by Allah Ta'ala and was rejected (Murdood), Hadhrat Jibra'eel (AS) and Meekaeel (AS) started weeping, Allah Ta'ala asked them as to why were they weeping? They replied that they were scared of Him. Allah Ta'ala told them to remain like that, and not be fearless at any stage.

Hadhrat Anas (RA) narrates that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) asked Hadhrat Jibra'eel (AS) why he had never seen Hadhrat Meekaeel (AS) laughing. Hadhrat Jibra'eel (AS) replied that ever since the Hell (Jahannum) was created, Meekaeel (AS) has never laughed.

These two angels, Hadhrat Jibra'eel (AS) and Meekaeel (AS) have more knowledge (Ma'ârifat) of Allah Ta'ala than any other angel, and that is why they fear Him more, knowing the Greatness of Allah Ta'ala.

Fear of other Ambiya (Prophets) (AS) and Sahâbah al-Kirâm (RA)

Hadhrat Abu Darda (RA) narrates that when Hadhrat Ibrahim (AS), used to offer Salâh, due to the fear of Allah Ta'ala the noise from his chest could be heard at a distance of one Qous (about three Kilometers), such was the degree of fear of Allah Ta'ala in his heart.

Hadhrat Mujahid (RA) narrates that Hadhrat Dawood (AS) wept in Sajdah for forty days so much so that grass sprouted at that site because of his tears. He heard a voice from Allah Ta'ala, "O! Dawood, if you are hungry, you will get food to eat, if you are thirsty, you will get water to drink, if you are naked, you will get clothes to wear. Hadhrat Dawood (AS) had such a cry that the nearby wood caught fire due to its heat. Allah Ta'ala then bestowed upon him Maghfirat (forgive-ness) and accepted his Tawbah. Thereafter Hadhrat Dawood (AS) made a request "O! Allah Ta'ala, my sin should be written on my hand"; immediately the sin he had committed got inscribed on his hand and whenever he used to eat or drink, he used first to weep on seeing his sin on his hand.

It may seem strange to us because of our limited knowledge of Allah Ta'ala. Fortunate are those who recognise and appreciate the Greatness of Allah Ta'ala and behave accordingly. Unfortunately, nowadays we see most of the Muslims are unaware of the Greatness of Allah Ta'ala , His

book – the Qur’ân and His messenger Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). If today’s Muslim has to make jokes, he finds himself at ease and liberty to make joke of Allah Ta’ala, His Rasul (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and the Shariat.. Hadhrat Fazal-ul-Rahaman Ganj Muradabadi (RA), a great saint used to say that whenever he utters the name of Allah Ta’ala, he experience such sweetness on his tongue as if sugar has been placed on it. He used to say that he was not making an exaggeration in saying that but was stating a reality. Hadhrat Thanvi (RA) used to say that whenever you utter the name of a citrus food say lemon, your mouth starts watering. If the name of such an ordinary thing is having such an effect to make mouth to water, how is it possible that uttering the name of the Creator and the Cherisher of all of worlds – Almighty Allah Ta’ala will have no effect.

Hadhrat Yahya (AS), the son Hadhrat Zakarya (AS) often used to weep because of fear of Allah Ta’ala. The constant flow of tears down his cheeks had created grooves on his cheeks. Once Hadhrat Zakariya (AS) told Hadhrat Yahya (AS) that he had prayed to Allah Ta’ala (AS) to give him such a child who will soothe their eyes but you are all the time weeping. Hadhrat Yahya (AS) replied "O! my dear father, I have heard from Hadhrat Jibra’eel (AS) that there is a valley between the paradise and the hell and only those will pass that valley safely who often remained in tears because of the fear of Allah Ta’ala." Hadhrat Zakariya (AS) told his son Hadhrat Yahya (RA), "O! my dear son, then weep as much as you can."

After Ambiya (AS), it were Sahâbah-al-Kirâm (RA) (The companions) who had utmost degree of Ma’ârifat of Allah Ta’ala. During the day they used to fight their enemies with tremendous courage and strength; the enemies used to shiver on seeing them but these brave people were always having their hearts palpating fast due to the fear of Allah Ta’ala. Despite the hectic

day's work, it was only the fear of Allah Ta'ala which was snatching their sleep during the night. They used to make Istigfaar (invoking forgiveness) for most part of the night.

Hadhrat Abu Bakr (RA) on seeing a bird said,

"It would have been very nice for me if I were a bird like this and I were not a man, " because he knew that a man has to appear before Allah Ta'ala, and this thought was too painful for him.

Hadhrat Abu Dhar (RA) used to say, it would have been better if he were a tree. Hadhrat Aisha (RA) used to say that she would prefer for herself to become non-existent than to face Allah Ta'ala on the Day of Judgment.

From these few examples of Ambiya (AS) and Sahâbah al-Kiraam (RA), we should understand as to what was the degree of fear of Allah Ta'ala in their hearts and how much they had the Ma'ârifat of the Greatness of Allah Ta'ala. They were not only having the fear of Allah Ta'ala but were having His extreme love also. Here, one may say that how is it possible to have the maximum fear of somebody and maximum love of the same person at the same time. This is very simple to understand, firstly one should know that fear is of two types, fear of snake is of different nature and fear of father is of different nature. One is having the fear of father and at the same time one loves father, one's father beats one but one knows that he is doing it for one's betterment, that makes it different from the fear of a snake, at the same time it should be remembered that the pains one's father is taking for one's well being, that makes one to love father despite fearing him.

Similarly, those who recognise Allah Ta'ala, fear Allah Ta'ala and also love Him, the degree of love and fear depends upon the degree of their knowledge of Allah Ta'ala.

Allah Ta'ala says in the Qur'ân:

وَالَّذِينَ

"But those of Faith are overflowing in their love for Allah Ta'ala". (2:165)

First quality of a true believer is that he fears Allah Ta'ala and second quality is that he loves Allah Ta'ala more than any other thing. Hadhrat Hassan Basri (RA) used to say that one who recognises Allah Ta'ala, loves Him. A Muslim has to understand that Allah Ta'ala is the only one Who deserves love. This Muhabbat (Love) of Allah Ta'ala adds a unique quality to a Muslim's character. Those who are devoid of this Muhabbat are dry, their lives are arid and fruitless. One can appreciate this only after tasting the sweetness of this Muhabbat of Allah Ta'ala. May Allah Ta'ala bestow this treasure upon all of us. It was this Muhabbat of Allah Ta'ala which made Sahâbah al-Kirâm to offer great sacrifices for its sake. They understood the fact that the entire universe including their own lives and properties had no value when compared to a single sip of this Muhabbat of Allah Ta'ala. After tasting this wonderful wine of Muhabbat of Allah Ta'ala they easily got prepared to sacrifice their everything for achieving this.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) used to pray Allah Ta'ala as:

يحبك حبك أسألك إني اللهم

"O Allah Ta'ala: bestow me with Your love and love of those who love You".

You can see that Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) had maximum amount of love for Allah Ta'ala but still he asks for more and more of it, not only that but he also asks to have love of those who love Allah Ta'ala.

Fear and love are functions of Qalb. If the Qalb is alive and functioning properly, it will have these properties. Unfortunately, today the Muslims are almost dead as far as their Qalb is concerned and hence void of this fear and love of Allah Ta'ala. Its absence keeps them away from the treasures of the glorious Qur'ân.

It has been earlier mentioned that remembrance of Allah Ta'ala is one of the important causes of revivification of Qalb, which is the instrument for understanding the Qur'ân. This remembrance of Allah Ta'ala will be effective only when it is combined with the extreme fear and love of Allah Ta'ala, keeping in view His Greatness and immense bounties upon us. For obtaining these qualities of fear and love of Allah Ta'ala, one should spend some amount of time in the company (Suhbat) of those whom Allah Ta'ala has given these qualities, otherwise, it is very difficult to achieve these things.

Remembrance of death and sense of accountability as a cue of revivification of Qalb

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said that:

Qalb gets rusted. He was asked by his companions y as to how can this rust be removed from the Qalb. Rasulullahe replied, the rust of the Qalb can be removed by two things viz; remembrance of death and recitation of the Qur'ân. (Baihaqi)

Remembrance of death plays a very effective role in purifying the heart. Allah Ta'ala has created man as a very wonderful creature. Despite having excellent qualities, man has also some characteristics contrary to excellent and one of them is negligence. It would have been very difficult for man to commit a sin if this negligence would not have existed. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) says that a Mumin (true believer) does not remain a Mumin during the time he steals or indulges in adultery .There is a consensus among the scholars (Ulema-e-Haq) that one does not become a Kaafir (disbeliever) by committing a grave sin. But the above mentioned Hadith states that a Mumin does not remain Mumin during the time he steals or commits adultery. Commentators of Hadith have given the explanation that it is impossible to commit disobedience of Allah Ta'ala in the presence of Imaan. In other words we can say that when a Mu'min commits a grave sin, his Imaan is present but he becomes negligent about it. It is during this period of negligence that he dares to commit disobedience of Allah Ta'ala. Prerequisite of Imaan is that one has firm belief that Allah Ta'ala is always watching and is always present wherever one may be. In presence of such a firm belief, how can a Mu'min dare to commit a sin? Obviously it is his negligence which makes him to commit a sin resulting in rusting of his Qalb. Unfortunately most of the Muslims today spend their whole lives under the dark clouds of this negligence (Gafat). This negligence is the root cause of deteriorating condition of the

present day Muslims and their unawareness about the treasures of the glorious Qur'ân. It has been many times stated that the instrument for understanding the Qur'ân is the Qalb and that the sins committed cause rusting of the Qalb and hence depriving it of its ability to understand the Qur'ân. Here we can understand that a Mu'min commits a sin when he is negligent of the basic belief of Imaan that Allah Ta'ala is seeing, is present and that he has to appear before Him for accountability on the Day of Judgment.

Since Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has been the most kind to his Ummah, he (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has very kindly taught the Muslims that if they want to get rid of the rust on their Qaloob in order to get it revived, they should constantly remember death in abundance. Every one of us must have experienced the softening of heart on the death of any of our close relative. One experiences a strange change in his heart. Man is such a negligent creature that he even forgets this absolute reality of death which he witnesses now and then. This negligence is indeed horrible. This negligence hardens his Qalb and he gets busy with mundane affairs to such an extent that his Qalb loses all its excellences. The death of some near and dear one reminds him of the short life span of this world life and the everlasting life in the Hereafter. At the same time death makes him to remind the horrifying incidents which he has to experience after death. It makes him to remind that he has to leave his children, wife, parents and other relations who are most dear to him and for whom he is working day in and day out. It makes him remind the luxurious bungalows and all its luxurious decorative things will remain behind and won't accompany him in the grave. These painful thoughts definitely soften the hardened hearts.

Distant hopes

One of the important causes as well as the effect of the negligence is development of distant hopes.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) says in a Hadith:

"I fear two things that may overcome you, first – obedience of the desires of Nafs (self) and second – the distant hopes (Tooli-Amal)". (Mishkat Sharief)

Satan (Shaitân) takes full advantage of this quality of negligence of a man and involves him in distant hopes. The distant hopes mean that a person thinks in his inner thoughts of great ambitious plans which he hopes may get fulfilled in the coming decades, but at the same time forgetting that the present day may be his last day. He enjoys the thoughts of these future plans (in air) least realizing that he is wasting his time and that Satan (Shaitân) and his self (Nafs) are keeping him away from the Reality.

When Imâm Ghazzali (RA) wrote the chapter of "Akhlaaqi-Razeelah – ‘Despicable Morals’" in his famous book "Ihya-ul-Uloom", he kept this bad quality of distant hopes on number one in the list of human despicable morals. When I read this in the early years of my life, I got surprised to see this at the top of the list and other bad qualities like pride, jealousy, greed, back biting etc below it. I could not understand it at that time, but later on as I gained some experience, I had no words to praise the depth of Ilm (know-ledge), this great man of Islam (Imâm Ghazzali R.A) was having as he has rightly placed this on number one. I could also appreciate by the grace of Allah Ta’ala, that this bad disease of distant hopes ruins a Muslim. A person who gets this disease of distant hopes, is always having false hopes about his future, lives in a fool’s paradise. These distant hopes keep

him away from Allah Ta'ala, and from the real life – The Hereafter. He remains busy in materialistic things least realizing that they are not going to last. He gets no time to explore the treasures of the Holy Qur'an. He boasts of his worldly status, worldly knowledge and worldly gains. He is like a person who constructs a huge beautiful building on a bridge, feels proud of it and takes rest in that building very comfortably. He is satisfied and felt secure in this building. Suddenly a strong wave arises from the river, strikes against the bridge and engulfs it and this man's false paradise. Then this person realizes that every thing in this world was a nightmare. He wakes up to the realities at a time when it is too late and of no use to him.

Most of us know the story of Shaikh Chilly. He becomes a very rich man in a few minutes and marries a very beautiful lady in his thoughts while carrying a tin of oil on his head (as he was a very poor porter). He gets lost in his thoughts feeling so much joy that he shakes his head in happiness and the tin of oil falls down and collapses and all his hopes are dashed to ground. We laugh at him whenever we narrate this incident, but if we go a little deeper in ourselves with sincerity, most of us will definitely find that we are no different than Shaikh Chilly. We will find out that we too also think like Shaikh Chilly. Then what is the difference? There appears to be no difference. May Allah Ta'ala make all of us to understand this point and cure us of this fatal disease of Tooli Amal. The ultimate result of both these despicable morals i.e., distant hopes and negligence is the cause of the rusting of the Qalb. This rusted Qalb remains blind to the realities revealed in the Qur'an. The remedy lies in the remembrance of death. A person who remember death cannot think of distant hopes and cannot afford to be negligent of his basic duties which include knowing Allah Ta'ala, His Messenger (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and understanding of the Qur'an.

How to remember death

Every night when you go to bed, switch off the lights, close your eyes, when it is absolutely calm in the room, start thinking about death as this -- it may be my last night, I may not get up from my bed tomorrow. What will happen then? My children, wife and parents etc will remain behind. All my property will remain behind. My clothes will be taken off. I will be helpless in the hands of few people who will wash my body. I will be wrapped up in a simple white cloth (Kafan). I will then be put in a closed box (Taboot) and buried in the darkness of the grave. The grave will be closed and I will be alone there. Nakeer and Munkar – the two angels) will come and will question me. What will be my fate that time? What will be my fate on the Day of Judgment and so on and so forth.

Insha-Allah Ta'ala after a few days only one will appreciate the softening of his heart which one needs for understanding the Qur'ân.

Chapter 9 - Following of Sunnah of Rasulullah (SAW) as a cause of revivification of Qalb.

This is one of the most important causes of revivification of Qalb. Blessed are those who understand it and follow it from the core of their hearts. Earlier on it was comprehensively proved that if you want to get rid of the darkness of Qalb and to enlighten it with the Noor of the Qur'ân, you have to connect your Qalb with the power house of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).

Allah Ta'ala says in the Qur'ân:

رَحِيمٌ وَيَغْفِرُ يُحِبُّبِكُمْ

"Say:(O Muhammad)! "If you do love Allah Ta'ala, follow me: Allah Ta'ala will love you and forgive you your sins, for Allah Ta'ala is oft-forgiving, most merciful." (3:31)

In this verse Allah Ta'ala declares that if you want My (i.e, Allah Ta'ala's) love, you have only one way out, that is to follow Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). You know, the Qur'ân is the precious treasure of Allah Ta'ala. He will bestow this treasure only to those whom He loves. In other words, first we have to behave in such a way so that one becomes beloved of Allah Ta'ala, otherwise how can you expect His blessings, particularly a blessing like that of Al-Qur'ân. Allah Ta'ala has not left this for us to think how can we make Him happy. He has been kind enough to tell us well in advance as to what is the thing which He expects from us so that He may

love us and subsequently bestow upon us His unlimited blessings, best of which is the Qur'ân. He says that He will love those who follow Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).

Unfortunately, these days so called modern Muslims, who are highly influenced by the apparently glittering west, think that following Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is unnecessary and orthodox.

Allah Ta'ala says:

فِيهِمْ

"Indeed, ye have in the Messenger of Allah Ta'ala an excellent exemplar".
(60:6)

Allah Ta'ala says that the best example for you is the life of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and the so called modern Muslims of today by their deeds if not by their belief, say that the best way is the western way of life. How can these people understand the divine message of the Qur'ân? The Qur'ân is guidance for those who fear Allah Ta'ala and abstain from sins.

Allah Ta'ala says in the Qur'ân:

لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ هُدًى فَيُؤْتِيهِمْ

"It is Guidance sure, without doubt, to those who fear Allah Ta'ala". (2:2)

One who fears Allah Ta'ala, will not displease Him. From the above verse (3:31) it is clear that Allah Ta'ala will not be pleased with somebody who does not follow Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).

How can following of Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) help in understanding the Qur'an

Abdul Razak has narrated that Hadhrat Jabir bin Abdullah (RA) asked the Messenger of Allah Ta'ala:

"O, Messenger of Allah, tell me which thing Allah Ta'ala created before all the things?"

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) replied:

"O Jabir, Allah Ta'ala created the Noor of your Nabi (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) before everything. Then that Noor continued to travel by the power of Almighty Allah Ta'ala. That was the time when there was no Loh or Qalm, no Jannat or Jahannum, no angel, no sky or earth, no sun or moon and no Jinn or human being. After that when Allah Ta'ala wanted to create the Makhlooq (creatures), He divided this Noor into four parts and created Qalm with one part, Loh with second part and Arsh with third part."

From above Hadith we have seen that Noor of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was created directly from the Noor of Allah Ta'ala and that this Noor-i-Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is distributed in other created things like Loh, Qalm and Arsh etc. It is this Noor which can lead a person to the Noor of Allah Ta'ala and that of the Qur'an. If one tries all other methods to get this Noor of the Qur'an one will never succeed unless one gets connected to this Noor of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).

Every aspect of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is full of Noor, whether it be his pious Rooh (spirit) or Jasad-i-Athar (body) or his words or deeds. He was not a Noor for himself only. Allah Ta'ala says that He has sent him as Noor (to mankind). Unfortunate are those who are devoid of this Noor and blessed are those who are cherishing this wealth.

When a Mu'min (believer) acts according to the Sunnah (tradition) of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), each such deed carries a Noor with it which illuminates and enlightens the Qalb of the doer of this deed, which has been done strictly as per Sunnah of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). These are called Anwaar-i-Sunnan. Say for example, a person has to take his meals, he takes his meals as per Sunnah – washing both of his hands before eating, recites Bismillah, lays the Dastaarkhan (sheet), takes the food from front side of the plate etc. He does this with the Niyyat that these are the Sunnah of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and that Allah Ta'ala likes him to follow Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). Now, one person takes his meals but does not do these things and does not make this Niyyat and the other person takes his meals according to the Sunnah. Both take meals, yet there is a great difference between the two. Both get energies for their bodies from the food, but the

second person who takes the meals as per Sunnah gets Roohani (spiritual) energy as well. This person with Roohani (spiritual) energy is better placed for understanding the Qur'ân than the first one. From this example one must have understood how following of Sunnah is necessary for understanding the Qur'ân and how the deeds not as per Sunnah can deprive a person from understanding the Qur'ân. Here it may be understood that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) says that the Dua of such a person is not accepted by Allah Ta'ala who takes Haraam food. Here again this Haraam food spoils the Qalb thus depriving the blessings of Dua to shower upon this person.

This thing is so easy to understand as it has very simple reasoning but unfortunately the Qalob (hearts) of majority of Muslims have got so much darkened and lifeless that they fail to understand this simple fact as to how can following of the Sunnah help in understanding the Qur'ân. These days there are thousands of libraries, millions of books, hundreds of journals, advanced audio visual methods of propagating Islam and countless conferences and other Islamic congregation held everywhere. Islamic history reveals that in earlier centuries these things were not available in plenty. All the same earlier Muslims were qualitatively far superior to the modern Muslims. If you measure it by using the modern yardstick then the situation should have been reverse i.e., with the modern advances which are providing more and more information easily to a Muslim, should have been qualitatively better but it is not so. It is simply because today's Muslim, highly overawed and greatly influenced by the western culture, thinks that he can become a good Muslim and can understand the Qur'ân by using the modern audio visual aids of propagation and by reading too many books even if his actions and lifestyle is totally western and against the Sunnah of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).

Hadhrat Imâm Malik (RA) used to say that this Ummah cannot regain its glory unless it adopts the same means which were adopted by earlier Muslims i.e., Sahâbah al-Kirâm (RA) and Taaba'een. The secret of success and the source of the knowledge was the Sunnah of Rasullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).

Chapter 10 - Suhabat of Ahl-e-Dil as a Cause of Revivification of Qalb

Allah Ta'ala says in Qur'ân:

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِالْحَقِّ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِالْحَقِّ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِالْحَقِّ

"O! Believers remain with truthful". (9:119)

Hadhart Luqman (AS) advised his son:

" O! My son, take it obligatory upon yourself to sit in the company of Ulema (The scholars), and listen to the talk of Hukama (those who have been bestowed with wisdom), because their words are for you as rain for dry land."

Hadhrat Imâm Shafa'ee (RA) once complained to his spiritual teacher Hadhrat Imâm Waki (RA) about his defective memory. As per Imam Shafa'ee his memory was not up to the mark he would have liked it to be.

What answer normally would one expect for such a question? Ordinarily one would advise such people who complain of defective memory that they should take nutritious foods like milk, almonds etc. But Imâm Waki (RA) was a spiritual sage (Roohani Hakim). He had perfect vision on the root cause of such diseases. Imâm Waki (RA) advised Imâm Shafa'ee (RA)

that if he want to improve his memory he should shun away the sins. Ordinarily one would wonder about the correlation of sins with memory. Imâm Waki (RA) further explained this to his student, Imâm Shafa'ee (RA), by saying that this knowledge is a Noor (light) from the Noor of Allah Ta'ala (Divine light) and that this Noor is not given to a sinner. Since, sins are filthy and the Ilm (knowledge) is a pious Noor, if the container i.e. the Qalb is full of filth of sins, it will not receive this Noor and will remain devoid of it. Here one can understand from the answer of this great saintly scholar that instrument for understanding and memorising Al- Qur'ân is Qalb and the sins deprive the Qalb of this capability.

It can be correlated with the advice of Hadhrat Luqman (AS) to his son that the Qalb also needs watering as the land needs rain. The water of Qalb are the words of pious people and company of the Ulema. How is it possible that one's dead and dry heart will get revived in the company of such people? Remember that the Nafs and the Shaitân are two things which cause opacity of Qalb by way of sins. The Shaitân's origin is fire. So, a person has two kinds of fires with him, one is the fire of his baser self (Nafs) and other is the fire of Satan (Shaitân), the smoke of these fires is blackening his Qalb all the time. When a person sits in the company of the pious Muttaqi people who have got their hearts purified and enlightened by the Noor of Allah Ta'ala the Tajalliyaat of Allah Ta'ala that are always falling on their hearts change the condition of this person miraculously. When they talk, this divine light i.e., Noor mixes up with their words and when they utter such words from their mouth, they penetrate deep into the sincere listener's heart and revivify it. The fire of Shaitân and that of his baser self gets extinguished by the Noor of the hearts of these pious people.

One can observe this light (Noor) when he goes to such a pious man who advises him to offer Salâh regularly or to tell the truth. This person after

returning from starts offering Salâh regularly. This person was knowing it already that Salâh is compulsory and should be offered, or that one should tell the truth but still he was not doing so. What has happened by a simple sentence of this pious man that now this person has started offering prayers? Again, the same thing, he was very well knowing that Salâh should be offered but his baser self i.e., Nafs and Shaitân were very strong and were not allowing him to do so. When he remained in the company of a pious person so some moments, the Noor emanating from his heart extinguished the fire of Shaitân, so he could easily overpower Shaitân and Nafs and thus started offering Salâh and acquired the habit of telling the truth.

If one wants to do good deeds which he already knows, it is obligatory for him to sit in the company of Sâlihîn (the pious people).

Suhbat-i-Sâlihîn is a very exalted thing in this world. It is said that there are many advantages to remain in solitude, but one of the biggest disadvantage of this is that in it Suhbat-i-Sâlihîn is not available and such people lose the blessings of their pious company. One of the reasons mentioned for the Iblees becoming Mardood (condemned) is that he was avoiding the company of Noori angels when he was living with them and was proud of his worship.

Allah Ta'ala ordered Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam),

رَبِّهِمْ عُونَ الَّذِينَ

وَجْهًا يُرِيدُونَ

"And keep yourself content with those who call on their Lord morning and evening, seeking His face". (18:28)

Though Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was always in the company of Allah Ta'ala but this Aayat was still revealed for the teaching of Ummah.

Effects of good company (Suhabat)

إِيَّاسَ سَعِيدٍ سُلَيْمَانَ
عَلَيْهِ صَلَّى -
لِيَحْيَى - نُسَيْرِ - التَّمِيمِيُّ يَحْيَى يَحْيَى
الْأَسَدِيُّ النَّهْدِيُّ الْجُرَيْرِيُّ
يَا كَيْفَ تَقِينِي - وَوَسَلَّمَ
يُذَكِّرُنَا وَوَسَلَّمَ عَلَيْهِ صَلَّى -
كَثِيرًا أَفْسَدِينَا الضَّيِّعَاتِ
وَسَلَّمَ عَلَيْهِ صَلَّى -
يَا . « وَوَسَلَّمَ عَلَيْهِ صَلَّى -
يَا .
بِيَدِهِ « وَوَسَلَّمَ عَلَيْهِ صَلَّى -
يَا
» .

Hanzala Usayyidi, who was amongst the scribes of Allah's Messenger (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). reported: I met Abu Bakr. He said: How are you? He (Hanzala) said: Hanzala has turned to be a hypocrite. He (Abu Bakr) said: Hallowed be Allah, what are you saying? Thereupon he said: I say that when we are in the company of Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) we ponder over Hell-Fire and Paradise as if we are seeing them with our very eyes and when we are away from Allah's Messenger

(Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) we attend to our wives, our children, our business; most of these things (pertaining to After-life) slip out of our minds. Abu Bakr said: By Allah, I also experience the same. So I and Abu Bakr went to Allah's Messenger (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and said to him: Allah's Messenger, Hanzala has turned to be a hypocrite. Thereupon Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) said: What has happened to you? I said: Allah's Messenger, when we are in your company, we are reminded of Hell-Fire and Paradise as if we are seeing them with our own eyes, but whenever we go away from you and attend to our wives, children and business, much of these things go out of our minds.

Thereupon Allah's Messenger (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: By Him in Whose Hand is my life, if your state of mind remains the same as it is in my presence and you are always busy in remembrance (of Allah), the Angels will shake hands with you in your beds and in your paths but, Hanzala, time should be devoted (to the worldly affairs) and time (should be devoted to prayer and meditation). He (the Holy Prophet) said this thrice.

From this incident many lessons are derived but I will confine myself to my topic only that is in the Suhabat of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), the Sahâbah were experiencing strange things which they lacked in his absence. Sahâbah Al-Kiram said that they noticed dramatic change in themselves after the departure of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) from the world so soon that they had not even finished the burial ceremony of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and the clay of the grave was still sticking to their hands.

Effects of bad company (Suhabat)

Once Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was reciting Qur'ân- i- Sharief in Salâh while he was Imâm of Sahâbahh-Kirâm (RA). During the course of recitation of the Qur'ân, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) experienced some difficulty in reciting. After the completion of Salâh (prayer), Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) turned towards the Sahâbah (RA) and said,

"What has happened to the people that they are joining the Salâh (prayer) without proper Wudhu(ablution)." (Mishkat Sharief)

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) had come to know {through the intuition) that a person had joined the congregational Salâh without proper Wudhu and the effect of this was experienced by Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) in the form of difficulty in recitation of the Qur'ân. You can imagine that the effect of the company of a person who had not made the Wudhu properly was such that it even effected Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), who was the most perfect of the mankind. From this one can easily judge how one's Qalb must be getting ruined in the company of bad people who are always engaged in the disobedience of Allah Ta'ala. May Allah Ta'ala protect us.